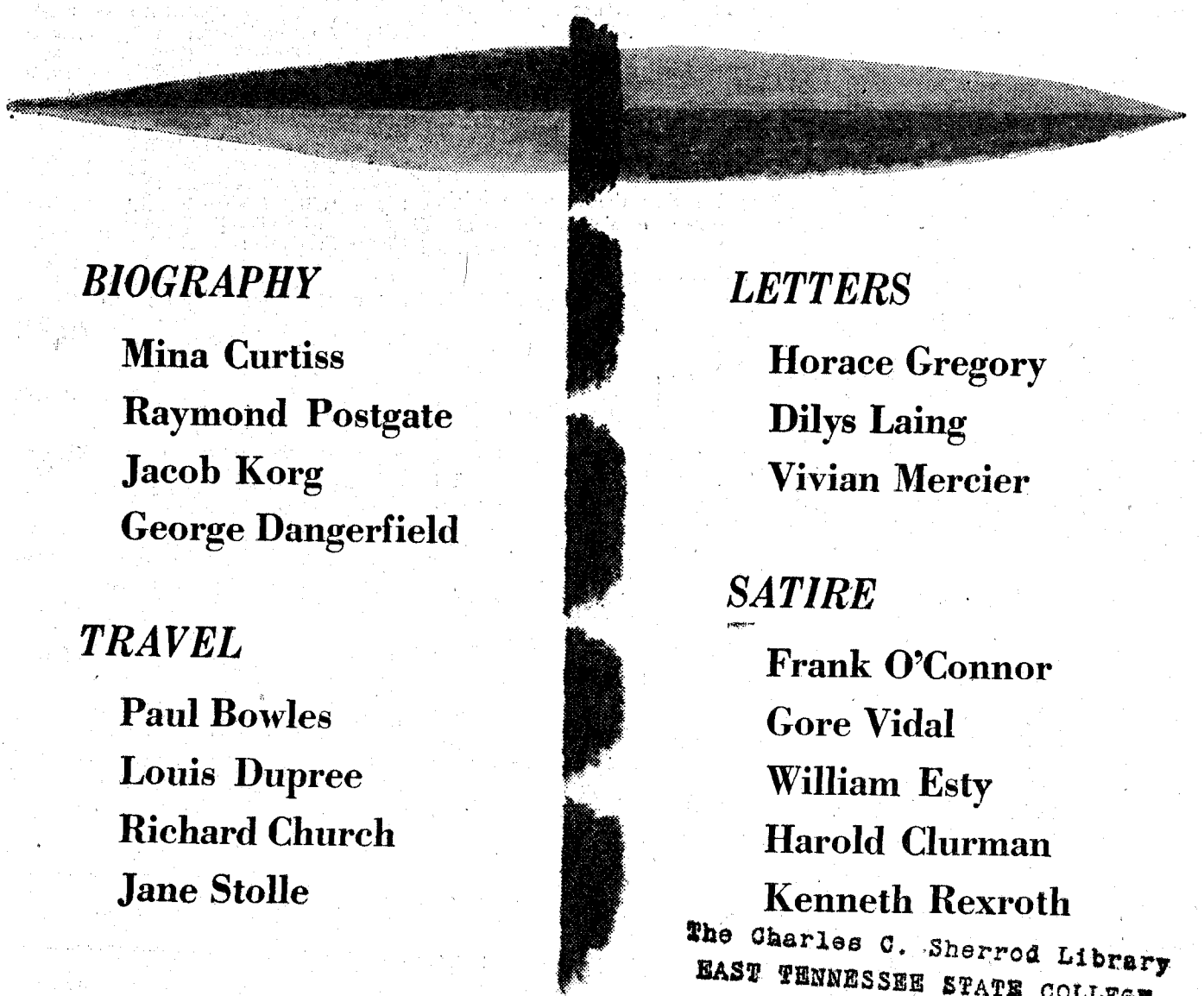
THE
NATION

APRIL 26, 1958 . . 25c

Spring Books



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SATIRE

Frank O'Connor
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LETTERS

Attractive Investment

Dear Sirs: With the support and encouragement of the U.S. Commissioner's Office for the Brussels World's Fair, a group of Columbia University School of Journalism students is planning an American bilingual daily newspaper for the Fair. While the Russians will distribute, without charge, a tri-weekly newspaper called *Sputnik*, the United States Government will be represented only by a souvenir booklet—to be sold—and occasional handouts. Therefore the publication we are planning will be the only one available *free* to the millions of prospective visitors to the Fair which will reflect, on a day-to-day basis, the American point of view.

But public support is needed to realize the project; the U.S. Commissioner's Office has no money available for the purpose. Support is solicited in two forms: cash contributions (tax deductible), or the purchase of advertising space in the publication, the first issue of which is scheduled to appear June 10.

Please direct inquiries and contributions to The Brussels Fair Courier, Inc., Graduate School of Journalism, Columbia University, New York 27, N.Y.

ERIC WENTWORTH

New York City

From an "A. I. Mother"

Dear Sirs: From an "A. I. Mother's" point of view, may I make a couple of remarks about Test-Tube Paternity (March 29 issue)? Dr. Guttmacher is obviously a brilliant and ethical physician who hopes to speed the day when A.I. parents [parents of a child conceived by means of artificial insemination] can be as frank before the world as those whose youngsters are legally adopted. Pending that happy development in our culture he (like me, who must even write you anonymously) has taken many secretive precautions in his practice and was careful to match the donors as closely as possible with the appearance of the sterile husbands.

Then—and this is what startles me—Dr. Guttmacher goes on to criticize physicians who also attempt to match blood type and who mix a bit of the husband's semen with that of the donor. I suspect that the good doctor is like many others whose life work deals with babies. They tend to forget that in an amazingly short time the baby becomes a young man or woman needing an operation, or giving birth, or just taking the family's turn at the Blood Bank. "Oh, boys usually have their mother's blood type," a nurse may say blithely, and when the boy turns out to have a type that neither Mom *nor* Dad has, can't everyone imagine the look the nurse gives Mama?

I am grateful to those physicians who practice A.I.—they are admirable and respectable men. I merely want to say to them: keep as up to date as you can on new developments in the field of genetics; choose donors for resemblance to *both* the future father and mother in characteristics we know or suspect are inherited; and mix the two semens by all means, not because the matter will come up in a court of law, but to assist the A.I. parents in a few years to have the ring of truth in their voices when they tell their child how *his* conception occurred. You can't prove a negative and they *might* have had A.I.H. [A.I.H. means "artificial insemination — husband's." The writer is saying that by mixing the donor's semen with the husband's, it becomes difficult to disprove that the husband is not also the real father.—Ed.]

To those contemplating A.I., since the foregoing may sound glum, I want to say: go ahead—it is marvelous. If you have a boy, he is so likely to identify with the man who is, after all, his *real* father, and to copy his thoughts and conversation that the test-tube origin will not cross your minds for years at a time (unless you read an article or encounter that snoopy nurse!).

(Name withheld)

New York City

"The Principia" Explained

Dear Sirs: Our copy of the March 22 issue of *The Nation* has come to hand with the piece by Hale Champion entitled, The Nice Murderer, dealing with the Tom Cordry case. While we appreciate the dispassionate, non-sensational tone of Mr. Champion's article, we should like to correct one of his statements. He writes: "After an apparently uneventful childhood, [Cordry] prepared for college at Principia, a St. Louis school of excellent reputation operated by the Christian Science Chruch." The Principia is not "operated by the Christian Science Church." It is an independent, non-profit educational institution operated by individual Christian Scientists for young people from Christian Science families. It does not teach Christian Science and receives no financial support from and is not controlled by any church.

REBEKA A. P. DIETZ,
Editor of Publications, The Principia

St. Louis, Mo.

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The Nation, Apr. 26, 1958. Vol. 186, No. 17

The Nation, published weekly (except for omission of four summer issues) by The Nation Company and copyright 1958, in the U.S.A. by the Nation Associates, Inc., 333 Sixth Avenue, New York 14, N. Y. Second class mail privileges authorized at New York, N. Y.

Subscription Prices Domestic—One year $8, Two years $14, Three years $20. Additional postage per year, Foreign and Canadian $1.

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NEW YORK, SATURDAY, APRIL 26, 1958
VOLUME 186, NUMBER 17

THE NATION

EDITORIALS

The Power of the Purse

The smoke generators are in action and a dense fog shrouds the service reorganization battlefield (see last week's editorial). Through the murk can be heard the ringing tones of Senator Styles Bridges: "I am not going to surrender the power of the purse to Mr. McElroy, the President or anybody else." But there is no evidence whatever that the President ever had any intention of reaching for a "blank check to spend two-thirds of the national budget." On the other hand, the President's maneuver in seeking to postpone consideration of the issue of fiscal flexibility until next January is both disingenuous and tactically dubious. The handling of funds remains a key issue and a legitimate subject for debate. It will be debated—now.

The Defense Secretary should be in a position to reallocate up to 20 per cent, say, of the total budget without regard to service or original earmarking. This is a basic necessity for bringing some approach to functional efficiency into the technological-arms race. No one challenges the right of Congress to appropriate or not to appropriate—to reject, for instance, the Food and Drug Administration's request for an added $1,570,000 while granting another $6,000,000,000 for "defense." Nor is Congress without power to review the manner in which appropriations have been used. The difficulty lies elsewhere. While members may have an adequate idea of why they are rejecting or granting the requests of some government department, the increasing technicalization of military operations insures that the great majority will be unable to grasp the merits and demerits of Defense Department proposals.

But this is only part of the difficulty. The technological race proceeds at such breakneck speed that even those versed in its intricacies are often unsure of the outcome of pending developments. Moreover, a large proportion of military development, planning and production simply cannot be budgeted on an annual basis. And then there are the further confusions of secrecy. The result is that the military budget can be legislatively controlled only in general and vague terms, and the generality and vagueness are ever on the increase.

For all these reasons a degree of flexibility in the Defense Department's use of appropriations is perfectly in order. Nor is it clear how the existing laws which give the Secretary "direction, authority and control" over the services can be carried out unless the Secretary has some power of the purse of his own. This power is opposed by certain generals and admirals as well as by Congressmen, in a covert revolt against the civilians on the staff of the Defense Department controller and in the Bureau of the Budget who have managed to keep some sort of check on fiscal megalomania.

The Textbook-Model Recession

This recession, we said some weeks back (March 22, page 246), will educate. We were much too cautious. It is now clear that the years which have intervened since the last breadlines formed have produced a remarkable sophistication on matters economic. Consider, for example, *Business Week's* wrap-up on How the Slump Got That Way (April 5)—or, as it might better have been titled, "What Happened to the Boom?" "Basically," comments *Business Week*, "the thing that went wrong was that consumer borrowing, spending and income stopped growing at abnormal speed and returned to a more normal—or slightly less than normal—pace, while business capital spending, set in motion by business plans laid during the buoyant days of 1955, plunged upward." In support of this view, Harvard's James Duesenberry is quoted: "So what you have is steady growth of capital stock and a slower growth of income." Another Harvard economist, Arthur Smithies, enters the dialogue by observing that the present recession is a prime instance of *an inherent mechanism* in the U.S. private economy (our emphasis). "The basic factor in the current recession," he comments, "is that the economy generates capacity faster than demand." What happened, basically, to the boom is what usually has happened to booms, namely, the drive for expanded capacity overshot itself and produced, as Sir Geoffrey Crowther has pointed out in *The Economist*, "the very textbook model of a classic trade cycle." But does the Administration know this? At the moment it is acting as though the Keynesians in its ranks had been vanquished or silenced: witness the hesitation to cut taxes, the President's veto of the $1.7 billion river-and-harbor

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bill, and the failure to recognize the implications of rising prices in the "administered pricing" sector of the economy, during a period of declining demand.

Please, Mr. Truman!

Most of us had hoped that it might be possible for Mr. Truman to fade gradually from the national scene. He had a marvelous opportunity to depart in glory and most of us wished him well. But like so many little men, he was not content to call it quits with history. He wanted to strut just once again upon the national stage, to win some final rounds of applause. As a consequence, he has placed himself in an unpleasant light. It is embarrassing to see a former President of the United States question the word of a leading American journalist and come off second best. It is even more embarrassing to find a new word, "Trumanizing," coming into popular usage to define the process of tampering with the facts of history.

It is unpleasant to have a man who once referred to President Eisenhower as "General Demagogue," and who has always been a specialist in rough-and-tumble American politics, refuse to sit at table with Mr. Nixon because the Vice President once referred to him as a "traitor"—the more unpleasant, as it was Mr. Truman himself who signed the initial loyalty-security order under which thousands of American citizens were branded as disloyal with no better warrant than Mr. Nixon had when he called the former President a traitor. And a final sad comment: we hesitated to remark on Mr. Truman's unfortunate recent exchange with the City Council of Hiroshima because, somehow, we felt sorry for him, as one always feels sorry for a man who falls heir to responsibilities that are beyond his capacities. But now we feel perfectly free to say what perhaps we should have said at the time, namely, that Mr. Truman's rejoinder to the City Council of Hiroshima betrayed a lack of moral sensitivity that would be embarrassing if exhibited by any American but that, in a former President who ordered the bombing, was deeply humiliating.

Please, Mr. Truman, don't tempt history any further. It has a cruel way with those who push their luck a bit too far.

Nimble Fingers and Flying Feet

On the same day that Mr. Dulles, at a press conference, castigated Soviet diplomacy with a venom unusual even for him, 3,000 Americans wildly cheered a visiting Russian dance group in Carnegie Hall. Only a few days earlier, a Russian audience in Moscow had given an American pianist an equally vociferous welcome. The moral, of course, is so painfully obvious that, once drawn, it will be instantly criticized as overdrawn. Yet to those who say that history is hardly likely to record that the Cold War was undone by ten nimble fingers and a hundred pairs of flying feet, we say: are a hundred flying missiles likely to do better?

It would be ideal, of course, if Mr. Dulles could be induced to join the Bolshoi Ballet and Mr. Khrushchev to matriculate at the Juilliard School of Music. But short of this, we can still profit from the discovery that international relations flourish better in Tchaikovsky Hall than in the Kremlin, in Carnegie Hall than in the State Department. Let's have more relations where they are amiable and less where they are bitter. In this way, eventually, enough goodwill might be generated at the bottom to trickle up to the summit.

Saturday Evening's Children

President Eisenhower urges that we can lick the recession (now rapidly attaining a state of depression) if we will keep our chins up and our pocketbooks open —the public, he said, could do its bit just by buying the things it really needs.

But last month *The Saturday Evening Post*, a magazine that normally lives in one world with the President, published the modest, decent history of a man who almost fell into disaster by buying what he needed. Marion Rairigh, who tells of his experience through the professional pen of Elmont Waite, is a skilled worker in a California aviation plant. He has a wife and three children and he earns a fine salary. Mr. Rairigh is a good family man, in fact he has all of the solid virtues except one—he lacks patience. Coming out of the army with no possessions, but able to earn well and knowing what befitted him as a useful member of the most prosperous society on earth, Mr. Rairigh decided he needed quite a few things to make life modestly comfortable—a house, a car, a nice front yard, the usual electric and electronic pleasantries for kitchen and living room. No one suggested to him that Rome wasn't built in a day, so he built his in a day—on the instalment plan. Not bothering to add up all the weekly and monthly payments, he never realized that he had agreed to spend his salary before he'd earned it, and a good part of his wife's too. Then his wife's seasonal job came to an end and the Rairighs were in the soup.

They came out of it, grimly but happily, because their plight was so desperate that it couldn't be hidden (debt today is the one social disease that is still never mentioned) and they got professional help at the tricky job of spreading their income out thin. Even so, they lived on bread and water for almost three years. Mr. Rairigh is not exceptionally gullible—he just suffered from the illusion that a good American can have immediately whatever his greedy eyes light upon. That is the siren song of advertising, and we salute Mr. Rairigh for telling frankly how he succumbed and the *Satevepost* for biting the hand that feeds it.

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SPRING BOOKS

Section 1: BIOGRAPHY

A Busman's Holiday . . *by Mina Curtiss*

NOTHING could be more feckless than for a biographer, waiting to correct the proof of an eight-pound manuscript—a pound for each year of work—to sit in a sunny corner of the Arizona desert trying to do what she should have done eight years ago: *i.e.*, formulate the basic principles of writing a biography. But this first attempt at re-creating the life of a man known to me originally only as the composer of one great work of art was definitely the result of a seduction, an increasingly irresistible attraction to original documents, the basic substance of the craft of biography. I use the word "craft" in order to avoid controversy with my elders and betters.

Sir Harold Nicolson, whose recently published, highly readable *Sainte-Beuve* is an expression of gratitude for the "pleasure and instruction" derived by the author from the works of that critic, divides "the history of the lives of individual men as a branch of literature" into pure and impure biography. Impure biography stems from "the desire to compose the life of an individual as an illustration of some extraneous theory or conception . . . the undue intrusion of the biographer's personality or predilections." Pure biography must combine "the three elements of truth, individuality and art." Nicolson feels that in our age, because of the introduction of "scientific psychology . . . the three elements cannot again be combined in their proper proportions . . . that the scientific interest in biography is hostile to, and will in the end prove destructive of, the literary interest. . . . The biographical form will be given to fiction, the fictional form will be given to biography. When this happens 'pure' biography will cease to exist. . . . We shall not have another Boswell or another Lockhart."

The author of two wonderfully effective lives of men as different as the gentle poet, Cowper, and the brilliant statesman, Lord Melbourne, is less stringent in his definition than Nicolson, more reconciled to the age of science. "Biography is not an important form of literary art," Lord David Cecil modestly declares. "But it has a special interest for the student of modern literature. For it is the only new form. . . . Modern poetry and modern novels . . . are only new variations on old forms. . . . Not so biography which is not out of sympathy with the scientific spirit." The discoveries in the field of psychology enable "writers as never before to give a full account of human behavior."

The aim of the biographer of the past, says Lord David, was not artistic, it was useful. If he was a talented writer like Boswell his book became a work of art. But even had it not been, it would have succeeded in its primary purpose which was to tell the truth, to give information rather than to express his personal vision. A modern biography like Lytton Strachey's *Queen Victoria* is as much an expression of the author's personality as is *David Copperfield*.

LYTTON STRACHEY, primarily an artist, expressed his own conception of artistic truth. Like a designer of mosaics he was more interested in juxtaposing facts to execute his pattern than in informing readers of the historic truth. For example, in writing of the death of Lord Bacon, that "wonderful snake . . . that piece of shot silk," Strachey describes him dying as "an old man, disgraced, shattered, alone on Highgate Hill, stuffing a dead fowl with snow." Having depicted Bacon's life as that of a knave, Strachey could not resist allotting him a fool's death.

Strachey's source for this curiously dishonest sentence was John Aubrey, the so-called "maggotie-headed" gossip, whose chief interest in life was collecting facts. Here is his description of the death of Lord Bacon:

> Mr. Hobbs told me that the cause of his Lordship's death was trying an experiment; viz. as he was taking the Aire in a coach with Dr. Witherborne (a Scotchman, physician to the King), towards Highgate, snow lay on the ground, and it came into my Lord's thoughts, why flesh might not be preserved in snow, as in salt. They were resolved they would try the experiment presently. They alighted out of the coach and went into a poor woman's house at the bottom of Highgate Hill, and bought a Hen, and made the woman exenterate it, and then stuff the body with Snow, and my Lord did help to do it himselfe. The snow so chilled him that he immediately fell so extremely ill, that he could not return to his lodging . . . but went to the Earle of Arudel's house at Highgate . . . where . . . within two or three days . . . he dyed of suffocation.

Like Harold Nicolson, Lytton Strachey was not at home in an age of science.

André Maurois, on the other hand, can take science or leave it. From the beginning he has been unprejudiced in his use of any method that enabled him to project the image he wished to give of the subject of his admittedly subjective choice. In pointing out the difference between the artistic problems of the novelist and those of the biographer, he already confessed thirty years ago that he no longer liked *Ariel*, his more or less fictionalized life of Shelley. The novelist, godlike, may create

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MINA CURTISS translated The Letters of Marcel Proust. *Her biography*, Bizet and His World, *will be published later this year.*

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and people his universe. Yet this invented world must be true to life. "The absurdity of truth," M. Maurois writes, "is magnificent and well-nigh inimitable, and a man must have genius to be as flagrantly absurd as God."

But the biographer, whatever his choice of subject, is confined to the world of facts, of action, of ideas, of man's rather than God's creativity. The historical truth, which is essential in biography, is not the same truth as that created by the logic of the novelist's imagination. The biographer, said M. Maurois in 1929, "must do some work of composition, of course, or else he ceases to be an artist; but it must be more by means of the painter's or poet's rhythm." M. Maurois apparently came to recognize the fallacy in this biographical method: some twenty years later, in writing his excellent life of Marcel Proust, he changed his point of view. He, too, fell under the spell of documents. The excitement of reading unpublished letters, original manuscripts, proof-corrections in the author's revealing handwriting, seduced him into the realization that the science or art of detection, of searching out the truth about an artist and presenting him through his own writings is the most valid method in biography, and therefore a more satisfactory approach to self-expression for the biographer than the use of the painter's or poet's rhythm. How much more three-dimensional a figure is his Victor Hugo, so brilliantly and thoroughly documented, than his freer, more flamboyant evocation of Disraeli.

BUT the selection of documents, the decision of which letters to quote, which method to use in inserting quotations into the text is an art in itself. Confronted with the problem of conveying, without becoming either offensive or monotonous, the protean range of Hugo's sexual life, M. Maurois managed, by no attempt at exhaustiveness, but a most discerning and varied choice from the thousands of letters available to him, to give a true picture of the poet's extraordinary personal life. Love-letters, however, as someone has remarked, are far less fruitful to the biographer than account books, unless, of course, the letters are written by a man of genius like John Keats.

Ever since the publication half a century ago of a letter of Georges Bizet's in which he tells a friend of the breaking, because of family objections, of his two-week-old engagement to his future wife, Geneviève Halévy, persons interested in the life of the composer have wondered about the basis of these objections. In no published letter did he ever again mention the subject. But the reasons become clear in unpublished letters to his wife's uncle and in his mother-in-law's ledger. Madame Halévy, a very erratic lady, did not restrict herself to figures when adding up her accounts. Explosive remarks punctuate the columns, and in her attitude towards francs and centimes lay many of the clues for an otherwise unexplained incident which caused both her daughter and Bizet much unhappiness.

THERE is, of course, a danger that the spell cast over a biographer by unpublished documents may turn into a more or less virulent obsession. The ordinary reader is not even aware of the number of potentially absorbing but unpublishable or unreadable biographies he is deprived of because the author, too often a victim of the deadly influence of the Ph.D. thesis, has felt impelled to leave in his text all the hand-carved scaffolding necessary for the building of his work, but which becomes a barricade between the subject and the reader. Scholars who are subject to this affliction tend to minimize the interest of their subject matter and to forget their function of communicating to readers the information they seek.

The French are inclined to tax us with more interest in facts than in ideas. Their predilection for symbolic or philosophical rather than historical or factual biography is typified in Michelet's life of Jeanne d'Arc, recently published here in a new translation by Albert Guérard. In their popular biography, however, the old saw about *l'éléphant et l'amour* holds. Although they admittedly dislike the notion of foreigners writing the lives of Frenchmen, Irving Stone's *Lust for Life,* translated as *La Vie Passionnée de Van Gogh,* heads the list of a series which includes *La Vie Passionnée de Galiléen* by Fulton Oursler as well as the love-lives of Rembrandt, Shakespeare, Cortes, Mozart, etc. Even the serious and scholarly biography by Maurice Levaillant, a professor at the Sorbonne, published here with a subtitle, *The Dual Biography of Madame de Staël and Madame Récamier,* was originally entitled *Une Amitié Amoureuse,* translated as *The Passionate Exiles.* It is not always easy to distinguish between facts and ideas.

The British tend to make fun of

The Lottery

Que buen
numeros me quedan!

Mañana
luck is always for tomorrow
or tonight
when the lottery is drawn

The horse-drawn carriage rattles
and clatters down the street
the horse's bells jingle
on the embroidered harness
the driver sits alert and wears a hat
that is part of it

No one pays attention
the man will pay the driver
the cobbles will stay in the street
but luck is felt
in the small dark stores, the doorways
as the sound of bells and hoofs
on cobbles

Travellers are good luck
here
they cry *"maleta! maleta!"*
and run and touch a suitcase
for luck

"Nail
those long shadows to my cross!"
darkened doorways in sun-glare
a hammer
Silence of black skirts
unbelted
In the shadowed eyes
an ultimate patience
Death lives among the people
as Life does

Luck never
Luck is for people in carriages
for voyagers

Que buen numeros me quedaan
para HOY!
ultimo par' HOY!

PAUL BLACKBURN

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our preoccupation with exhaustive research, but actually they are quite as zealous as we are. They merely lack our enthusiasm for discovery. Old hands at the game, they are less exhibitionistic, more understated in proclaiming the results of their research. Also they are not crippled by the rigors of the Ph.D. thesis. Their university graduates write with more natural style and elegance, though often just as dully as ours. Much interesting new material, including Heine's letters to George Sand, was available to E. M. Butler, former Professor of German at Cambridge, whose *Heinrich Heine* appeared a short time ago. The book is thoroughly competent, but the long, important period of Heine's life in Paris is in no way illuminated either by the hitherto unpublished material, or by references to or quotations from the many eminent Frenchmen who were Heine's friends. The facts are stated, but neither the man, the poet, nor the Jew comes to life.

The weight of facts can indeed be ponderous. It takes a skillful and painstaking juggler to achieve the delicately balanced pattern necessary for a biography both readable and scholarly. Such a book, by an American who spent ten years at his task, is Leslie Marchand's magnificent three-volume *Byron*. Whether or not it is a work of art I am not prepared to say. But I know that it is "pure" biography. It re-creates truthfully, vividly, readably, with notes intended to increase the reader's understanding rather than to enhance the author's scholarly reputation, the life, or rather the many lives, as well as the life-time of its subject.

Lords, Leaders and Rascals

THE EARLY CHURCHILLS: An English Family. By A. L. Rowse. Harper & Bros. 378 pp. $6.50.

THE CHURCHILLS: From the Death of Marlborough to the Present. By A. L. Rowse. Harper & Bros. 464 pp. $7.50.

Raymond Postgate

THE 842 pages of Mr. Rowse's two volumes on the Churchill family form an important book and a formidable mass of reading, not all easy, but on the whole of intense interest. They are held together by a thesis which on inspection turns out to be false. Explicitly or implicitly, Mr. Rowse proceeds on the assumption that there are general Churchill characteristics which can be traced throughout the generations, and provide what is conventionally called an unfolding story. Of some families—the Huxleys, for example, with their rationalism, their combativeness, their high-mindedness and their scientific ability—this thesis seems true. But no common characteristic at all emerges to unite the Churchills who are painted here, certainly none of those popularly ascribed to them. Strong principles? The first Winston Churchill was a court sycophant, and the great Duke of Marlborough was a "very smooth man," smooth to the point of slipperiness. Courage? The fourth Duke was so timid he spent the last part of his life in hiding. Honesty? The fifth Duke was "little better than a common swindler." Intelligence and culture? There were few stupider bigots than the sixth Duke. At least, you will say, they were all individuals of marked character. Far from it. There are some here so colorless that even Mr. Rowse's loyalty can make nothing of them.

This, then, is a portrait gallery where the pictures are effectively unrelated to one another—even in physical form, for there could be few greater contrasts between the Churchills of Marlborough's day, graceful in face and figure, and the stocky, unbeautiful Churchill of today. But one by one, some of the pictures are well worth looking at.

The first, of an Elizabethan John Churchill, is too dim and faded to detain us; the second, which Mr. Rowse has painted in with patient detail, is the first Sir Winston Churchill, who flourished under Charles II and James II. It is an unpleasant portrait. The man was greedy and piled up money and estates, he wrote a servile book on monarchy and was an industrious politician in Parliament. So far as he had a personal policy, other than following the court, it was for oppressing the weak, whether they were journalists, dissenters, or merely the poor. He prostituted his daughter Arabella to James II—there is a brief sketch of her; she is a plain, skinny, white-faced young woman, falling clumsily off a horse and showing her legs most improperly, an accident which was the sole cause of her brief importance in history.

Sir Winston's son is a far more attractive figure than either of these; no portrait of the great Duke of Marlborough can be anything but dazzling. Mr. Rowse's is not new (how could it be?) but it is vivid, and yet at the end you wonder if you admire the Duke after all. "You are a rascal, but I forgive you, for you do it to get your bread," said Charles II to the young man when he found him in bed with his mistress, the Duchess of Cleveland. The charm worked on the King; after two hundred years it sometimes works on us and sometimes does not. Lord Chesterfield, of all people, found that "the Duke of Marlborough studied the art of pleasing" too much. Still, he was a very great man, and only occasionally do we wish for less love of money and more love of principle.

OF his wife Sarah we have no doubts. She was a woman of most remarkable character, and fortunate indeed we are never to have met her. The story of the unfolding of her grotesque personality is absorbing; there is no room to recall it here, but one cannot pass on without dwelling for a moment on her strange love affair with Queen Anne. Anne had a schoolgirl's passion for her, which Sarah accepted as her right. Anne invented names for the two of them — "Mrs. Morley and Mrs. Freeman"—so that no shadow of royal privilege should come between their perfect equality.

Sarah, as these strong, dominant girls do, ultimately destroyed the Queen's love by arrogance and jealousy; typically, she would not realize the truth and had almost literally to be driven away.

She lived to a great age, rich, rude, overbearing and a tyrant to her family and friends; and after her comes a series of wigged or whiskered portraits of forgotten Dukes and Lords. Their story is pretty confusing and not very important; they filled Blenheim with pictures and valuables or they sold them and spent the money like gods; they gambled or were Puritans; they angled for the Garter and got it or didn't get it—one goes rather fast through this gallery. Certainly the Duke who married Consuelo Vanderbilt and was unbearable to her would be worth a moment's study, but strangely enough Mr. Rowse refuses to tell that story. We have to pass on to Lord Randolph Churchill, Sir Win-

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ston's brilliant, unsuccessful and short-lived father.

Mr. Rowse's writing is in general rather slack and ejaculatory, especially in the second volume, but he prefaces Lord Randolph's story with a brilliantly written and accurate picture of Edwardian society, pointing out very truly that this had come into being long before Edward himself came to the throne. It was a brighter and gayer society, and less selfish perhaps, than the Regency; and it had a large share in forming both Lord Randolph and his greater son.

What shall we say, in front of that last portrait? Perhaps we are still standing too near to judge. Or rather, to abandon that metaphor, anybody who has lived through the past half-century is too filled with emotions still to be judicial. My chief surprise on reading this book was, frankly, to remember how intolerable Churchill seemed—indeed, was—for two-thirds of his life. Mr. Rowse is too loyal to underline it, but the truth is his political friends often could not bear him and his opponents always detested him. Sometimes their reasons were good, too. It was self-advertisement (even if unconscious) for a Home Secretary to call out the Army to catch three burglars and direct their firing himself, and for a First Lord of the Admiralty to leave his desk to conduct an unsuccessful descent on Antwerp. The fury of his attacks on his own countrymen in the general strike of 1926 caused wounds that have not ceased bleeding yet; his Chancellorship caused economic damage from which the country has not yet recovered. And yet it was he to whom we—Americans as well as British—owe more than any gratitude can ever pay; what he proved to have become was a leader such that even a political opponent does not today hear that distinctive thick voice without an emotion that he cannot and doesn't wish to control.

The explanation, I think, can only be given in a metaphor that he would understand; he is a wine of a well-known but rare type of vintage. There are many good workaday clarets to be had. There are vintages like 1929 which are smooth, scented and superb from their very beginning, Dukes of Marlborough among wines. There are others like 1934 which start brilliantly, with a heady perfume and a full claret taste but suddenly, like Lord Randolph, break down and you find there is nothing in the bottle but colored water. But just occasionally, as there was in 1928, you find a vintage of which nobody can make anything. Harsh, bright purple, heavy, acrid to smell, it seems undrinkable, and never likely to be anything else. Then without warning — some thirty years later it may be — the elements combine, and the happy man who has been wise enough to keep it has a wine that every connoisseur envies him. Mr. Churchill (neither Mr. Rowse nor I can bear that silly "Sir") is a 1928 claret.

Literature and Personality

THACKERAY: THE AGE OF WISDOM, 1847-1863. Vol. II. By Gordon N. Ray. McGraw-Hill. 523 pp. $8.

Jacob Korg

THE critical biography is a form that has only recently developed its highest standards. In the first examples, *Lives of the English Poets*, Dr. Johnson narrated the poet's life and then discussed his work without tracing any but the most obvious relationships between the two. The massive nineteenth-century biographies of literary men were satisfied with Johnson's method. Such works as Lockhart's *Life of Scott* (seven vols.) and Masson's life of Milton (six vols.) were in reality national monuments wherein every fact, anecdote and remark and every detail of personal life that suited current notions of propriety were preserved for an awed posterity. The books a man wrote were included as episodes in his life, side by side with his lawsuits or European travels.

The French critic Taine, arguing that the quality of a writer's work depended upon particular forces that influenced him, imposed new and interesting responsibilities upon the critical biographer. There are still many biographies of writers that present the facts for their own sake, or for the sake of history or drama, and which might as well be biographies of generals or merchants. But the biography that is consciously critical now assumes that there is a vital relationship between literary works and the personality that produces them, and takes this relationship as its subject.

Valuable critical biographies can appear only after a series of preliminary steps have been taken. When an important man dies, there is a flurry of publications by his friends and relations. This material is often prejudiced and poorly written by badly-qualified authors, but it does get first-hand impressions and facts recorded in print. Then, after intimate friends and correspondents have died, his letters and private papers will emerge in published form. The publication of letters and papers is a slow process. Some important documents of the eighteenth century, such as Boswell's "Journals" and the letters of Horace Walpole, have had to wait until recent years. Where figures of the twentieth century are concerned, it is safe to say that the process has only just begun. The serious biographer usually regards his subject's private papers, whether in published form or in manuscript, as necessary instruments for his work.

GORDON RAY is in the unusual position of having himself done much of the preliminary work for his biography of Thackeray. He has written a study which developed information about the novelist's life from his own books, has published a four-volume edition of Thackeray's letters and papers, and has uncovered and studied fresh manuscript material. Thus, *Thackeray*, to a far greater extent than most biographies of its kind, is the work of a single man. Even so, Mr. Ray's notes show that, like other literary biographers, he is indebted to a crowd of editors, memoirists and historians who came before him.

His life of Thackeray, which is certainly one of the most finished critical biographies ever written, contains a vast accumulation of data drawn from these sources. His skillful handling satisfies two requirements of biography which are nearly irreconcilable. He has covered the facts thoroughly and in detail, supporting every statement with conventional scholarly evidence; and he has worked them into a fabric that is a clear, vivid and absorbing revelation of his subject.

Further, Mr. Ray has accepted the special responsibility of the critical biographer by ordering his facts in such a way that they lead up to Thackeray's literary work. One is aware throughout the complicated narrative of Thackeray's varied activities that he is being studied as a writer.

For example, Thackeray's many years of work as a journalist established writing habits which were carried over into his novels, and which help to explain some of their peculiarities. In writing impromptu papers under the pressure of deadlines, Thackeray learned to make the most of limited material by extend-

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ed comment addressed directly to the reader. Most of his novels were written for serial publication, and the essayistic quality that modern readers often object to is explained by Thackeray's falling back, when he ran short of time, upon the ready expository style he had developed as a journalist.

The breakup of his family and his long frustration in achieving a settled domestic life explain the pathetic, sentimental note characteristic of much of his work. Similarly, the exceptional strength of *Henry Esmond* comes in part from the fact that the central situation is modeled after Thackeray's hopeless love for the wife of a friend, in part from his determination to free himself from serial publication and to construct a soundly-plotted story.

While Mr. Ray's treatment of the man and his works as parts of a single whole is impressive, his success has the effect of suggesting the limitations of critical biography as a way of studying literature. Biography is concerned with personality and its creations. Yet it is no more than a truism to say that great art detaches itself from the personality that produces it and survives independently through its own virtues. The fundamental questions about every work of art are matters of form and aesthetics, but they are a frontier which biography, with its love of the vivid, the human and the immediate, cannot pass.

The Conforming Eccentrics

GILBERT: HIS LIFE AND STRIFE. By Hesketh Pearson. Harper & Bros. 276 pp. $4.50.

OSCAR WILDE AND THE YELLOW NINETIES. By Frances Winwar. Harper & Bros. 375 pp. $5.

George Dangerfield

HESKETH PEARSON'S biography of W. S. Gilbert is a somewhat slipshod and hasty affair, consisting of thinner and thinner strips of anecdote sandwiched between thicker and thicker chunks of quoted correspondence. In spite of this, however, and because of the author's somewhat dispiriting *credo* that "it is safer for a biographer to exhibit his subject than attempt to explain him," *Gilbert* turns out to be quite a success.

To *exhibit* William Schenk Gilbert—to confine oneself, that is to say, to his public personality as the humorous moiety of the team of Gilbert and Sullivan—is to display, fortunately for Pearson, one of the prize oddities of late Victorian England. The old boy was a preposterous living cliché. He was everybody's idea of a funny man—disagreeable, cantankerous, a bad enemy, a remorseless bargainer, but underneath it all how generous, how impulsive, how kind to children and animals! He even put it on record that he couldn't bring himself to crush a beetle. He was also conservative, a prude, a blameless admirer of pretty young women, a model husband and a hero.

The private Gilbert—the poet who reveals, for example, under the playful surfaces of *The Bab Ballads,* such cruelty and such complacency—appears in this book only as an enigma which the author does not propose to solve. He gives us, instead, the portrait of a conformist—the man who wrote to please everybody's taste, and who cultivated a natural gift for rudeness and bad temper because that was what society wanted him to do. It is characteristic of this later and public Gilbert that, in spite of his quarrels and enmities, he never played this role of curmudgeon so hard that it ceased to pay. He really did have a kind heart, and it was—like everything else about him—very serviceable. It taught him to stop short.

Gilbert had a favorite plot—though he could never get Sullivan to write the music for it—which was something to do with people swallowing a magic potion or an enchanted lozenge and turning into their exact opposites. The ugly become beautiful or the beautiful ugly, the old become young, the timid, courageous, the wise, foolish, and so forth. Pearson, in one of his rare moments of speculation, suggests that this had something to do with Gilbert's unhappy youth, the memories of which he wished to reverse; and he may well be right. But when I think of the mature Gilbert snarling and grumbling away at a world with which he was very well content and which he had not the least desire to alter, I suspect that the point of this plot is that everything goes topsy-turvy, yet everything remains the same. When all the metamorphoses have been completed, there are just as many ugly and beautiful, wise and foolish, timid and courageous people as there were before. It is odd that Sullivan should have found this plot disagreeable, because it lies at the heart of almost all the wonderful things he wrote with Gilbert. Almost all make a lovely fuss over the thought that nothing, after all, need ever change; and dedicate their most intoxicating merriment to the sincere belief that the funniest, the happiest, and indeed the noblest of human endeavors is to cultivate the art of sticking permanently in the mud.

ACCORDING to Pearson, who got the story from Beerbohm Tree, there was only one known encounter between Oscar Wilde and William Gilbert. The story goes like this:

> At a supper-party at the Haymarket Theatre Wilde held the table with his conversation for about half an hour. Gilbert seized the first opportunity to pay a handsome compliment: "I wish I could talk like you," which he followed with the acid comment: "I'd keep my mouth shut and claim it as a virtue." Wilde flashed back: "Ah, that would be selfish! I could deny myself the pleasure of talking, but not to others the pleasure of listening."

This is a very significant story and its significance lies in the fact that it is so fearfully lame. This can't be Pearson's fault, because he is a good raconteur; nor could it have been Beerbohm Tree's fault, for the same reason. It seems obvious that Wilde and Gilbert—though

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Marthe

(from the French of René Char)

Marthe, these old walls can no
Longer hold you—pool that mirrors
My lonely monarchy. How
Will I ever be able to
Forget you, when I have
No more memory of you,
You who are the gathering present?
Let us be together
Without approaching,
Unprepared,
Like two poppies who make
One giant anemone of love.
I shall not enter
Your heart to limit its memory.
I shall not hold fast
Your mouth to hinder its opening
To the blue of the air and
The thirst of leaving.
I want you to have
Freedom and the wind of life
Over the threshold of forever
Before the night can no longer
be found.

KENNETH REXROTH

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protocol demanded some formal exchange of insult and witticism—were two professional entertainers who were not going to waste anything really good on each other.

If you read the lives of Wilde and Gilbert consecutively, you can see that—different and unequal as they were in every other respect—they were equally conformist. They were determined above all things to play, for a consideration, the role that society expected them to play. Their most steadfast desire was to please. Like Gilbert, Wilde had a dream world, in which everything changed and everything remained the same. It can be found in *The Importance of Being Earnest*: it is a world of Mayfair without stuffiness and Pimlico without police, where everybody does just what he pleases and nobody hurts anybody; and where nothing, really, ever occurs. When he was off duty, all Wilde asked was to be allowed to pursue this relatively harmless dream in the Cafe Royal, or Kettners, or Alfred Taylor's discreetly shaded sitting room in Little College Street.

THE opening chapters of Frances Winwar's *Oscar Wilde and the Yellow Nineties* (it first appeared in 1940 and is now reprinted) hardly suggest that she is going to lead us to this kind of Wilde. She makes the serious error of taking him seriously—of not realizing that the only way one can find the small and genuine artist in him is by refusing to reconcile oneself to the large and fraudulent one. When she calls his *Sphinx* ("Your eyes are like fantastic moons that shiver in some stagnant lake," etc., etc.) a "chimerical, sensuous, perverted, evil" poem, it hardly seems worth one's while to read any further. Fortunately, as her story proceeds, she grows less and less bemused, and when she comes to the trials of 1895—even though in her preface she describes them as a "Greek tragedy"—she handles her theme with a great deal of sense and feeling. It is the theme of the successful effort of an ugly, dull, frightened society to break a fat butterfly on the wheel.

But where she really succeeds is in showing us that Wilde had become so identified with Philistia (which he pretended to despise and to disobey) that when it called him evil and corrupt he actually believed what it said. He was a conformist who conformed too much; and he died of a credulous and broken heart.

Section 2: TRAVEL

The Challenge to Identity . . *by Paul Bowles*

WHETHER in reviews or publishers' blurbs, whether here or in England (where the genre flourishes more successfully) there would appear to be a question in the minds of those who write about travel books: who reads them, the stay-at-homes or the venturers-forth? Assuming that these categories define two kinds of temperament, and that many potential voyagers are prevented from achieving their desire to see the world only by force of circumstance, my own guess is that the travel-book public is composed almost exclusively of the venturers-forth—those who have gone and those who hope to go—but nowadays composed, unfortunately, of only a small percentage of them.

Even as recently as a century ago travel was a specialized activity. Distant places being out-of-bounds for all but a fortunate and resistant few, it was normal that the desire for contact with the exotic should be satisfied vicariously through reading. Now that in theory anyone can go anywhere, the travel book serves a different purpose; emphasis has shifted from the place to the effect of the place upon the person. The travel book necessarily has become more subjective, more "literary." But this tends to deprive the travel writer of his natural reader. The venturer-forth is inclined to be an extrovert, to despise second-hand experience. If he is going to South America—even if he only dreams of going—he is not eager to know Isherwood's impressions of it first. He wants a concise volume of data relating to the history, climate, customs and points of interest in each republic. He is even vaguely conscious of having decided to form his own impressions, and to hell with what someone else felt when he came face to face with Aconcagua.

What is a travel book? For me it is the story of what happened to one person in a particular place, and nothing more than that; it does not contain hotel and highway information, lists of useful phrases, statistics, or hints as to what kind of clothing is needed by the intending visitor. It may be that such books form a category which is doomed to extinction. I hope not, because there is nothing I enjoy more than reading an accurate account by an intelligent writer of what happened to him away from home.

THE subject-matter of the best travel books is the conflict between writer and place. It is not important which of them carries the day, so long as the struggle is faithfully recorded. It takes a writer with a gift for describing situation to do this well, which is perhaps the reason why many of the travel books that remain in the memory have been produced by writers expert at the fashioning of novels. One remembers Evelyn Waugh's indignation in Ethiopia, Graham Greene deadpanning through West Africa, Aldous Huxley letting Mexico get him down, Gide discovering his social conscience in the Congo, long after other equally accurate travel accounts have blurred and vanished. Given the novelistic skill of these particular writers it is perhaps perverse of me to prefer their few travel pieces to their novels, but I do.

The particularized travel books, those dealing with a definite quest or mission, along with records of exploration and conquest, have their own special charm, but too often the reader is made aware of the fact that they were penned by travelers who also wrote, rather than by

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writers who also traveled. (Michel Vieuchange's *Smara* is a distinguished exception, and for the reason that his quest was ultimately an interior one; he went in search of ecstasy, and finding only physical suffering, he was obliged to use the pages of his journal as an alembic in which to work the transformation.)

There is a category which in its approach and subject-matter comes closer to autobiography than to travel, but which because it deals with the displaced person in relatively unfamiliar surroundings is conceded to be a part of travel literature. This is the intimate account of a writer's daily life during his prolonged residence in one particular place abroad. There are several favorites of mine in this group: Flandrau's *Viva Mexico!,* Ackerley's *Hindoo Holiday,* Dinesen's *Out of Africa,* Peter Mayne's *The Alleys of Marrakech.* They are books in which the personality of the author is the decisive element; their charm derives from this unequivocal placing of emphasis upon personal attitudes and reflections.

I am wondering: in what way, if I were now engaged in writing a travel book, would my behavior be different from what it is at this very moment? I sit here on a bench in a tiny park overlooking the city of Lisbon. Harbor sounds float up from below, to be audible between the sharp cries of small children playing on the grass nearby. The light is very strong, although the sun is covered by a veil of haze, and the smell in the air is a compound of unidentifiable suggestions of spring. Suddenly the little red rubber ball the children have been tossing back and forth bounces through the iron grillwork of the fence and over the parapet into a walled courtyard far below. There is a good deal of shouted recrimination in the wake of this event, after which the young ballplayers disperse—all but one small boy, clearly the owner of the lost plaything, who remains behind, clutching the bars of the fence, staring wistfully downward. At this point I have my answer. If I were here to write a travel book, I should call him over and talk with him, offer him the money for another ball. But since I am not, I merely sit still and continue to imagine how, if I *were* to attempt to write such a book, I should go about it.

FOR a true travel book, I don't think a sufficiently accurate job can be done after the fact, if the writer has been living as he pleased during the time he proposes to write about, not taking notes, not conscious of his function as an instrument of reception. The ill-defined memory of his own emotional responses is always stronger than the exact memory of what caused them. Reliance upon recollection is proper to determining the substance of a novel, but not in this case, where it is too likely to alter the writing's firmness of texture.

The writer must make the decision to adhere to a scrupulous honesty in reporting. Any conscious distortion is equivalent to cheating at solitaire: the purpose of the game is nullified. The account must be as near the truth as he can get, and it seems to me the easiest way to achieve that is to aim for precision in describing his own reactions. A reader can get an idea of what a place is really like only if he knows what its effects were upon someone of whose character he has some idea, of whose preferences he is aware. Thus it seems essential that the writer place a certain insistence upon the objective presentation of his own personality; it provides an interpretive gauge with which the reader can measure for himself the relative importance of each detail, like the scale of miles in the corner of a map.

The problem of giving the travel account a linear structure is not primarily a literary one. It is more a matter involving the character and behavior of the writer. He has got to insure that the experiencing which will constitute his material comes into being. He is writing a story which he is obliged first to live out, and if the direction the story is taking appears to demand certain elements in which his life is lacking, he will need to know how to rearrange his existence so that those elements may be provided. His powers of invention must be applied to dealing, not with the question of writing, but

A Hard Look at the Department of Defense

FORGING A NEW SWORD

By WILLIAM R. KINTNER

in association with

JOSEPH I. COFFEY

and RAYMOND J. ALBRIGHT

Responsible officers with Pentagon experience speak frankly about what's wrong with our defense system and offer proposals for the kind of reorganization that will lead to greater security.

The authors describe the evolution of the Defense Department; they suggest areas for improvement and point out major shortcomings such as the waste and duplication of effort resulting from inter-service rivalry, the lack of coordination between the military services and the civilian command, etc.; and they outline specific measures for developing a stronger and more flexible defense structure.

This program, at once constructive and non-political, confronts frankly the human strains and stresses required to create the defense organization we need. "Nowhere else, so far as I know, is given so clearly and authoritatively the information in regard to the department of defense which the citizen needs in order to make up his mind on important matters of policy."—AUGUST HECKSCHER

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with his own relation to the external reality around him.

It goes without saying that whatever attempts have been undertaken to make a place accessible to the tourist are just so many barricades in the way of the writer, and if he manages to make contact with the place it will be in spite of them rather than thanks to them. The purpose of official aid for the visitor is to make individual research unnecessary; in many countries there is a further, more sinister design in government-sponsored tourist bureaus: a conscious intent to discourage personal relationships between strangers and residents. Writers are particularly suspect, of course, but it is one of their routine tasks to circumvent this sort of thing. "You have no need to talk with anyone," I was assured by a policeman in an African country. "Our tourist office will supply you with guides at fixed rates and a special booklet in English free of charge that will give you all the information you require."

And again: "How do I know you're a bona fide tourist?" demanded an employee of a South American consulate in London when I applied for a visa. "Why, what would I be?" I said. "I don't know," she replied. "It says 'writer' in your passport. How do *I* know what you're going to do?" "You don't," I told her, and went to the Far East instead.

Man's Search for Himself

PEOPLE OF THE REEDS. By Gavin Maxwell. Harper & Bros. 224 pp. $4.50.
HORNED MOON. By Ian Stephens. Indiana University Press. 288 pp. $5.

Louis Dupree

MAN is continually seeking himself. As he goes out from this familiar earth, as his scientists force him to fly faster, farther, possibly past time in outer space, he is also looking back. Before he leaves this planet for the stars, man wants to know what he is like—where he came from, what his earth is made of and how it feels as well as how it seems.

Part of this seeking is obvious escapism, part of it a passionate desire to know, to seek, to find before—before what? This is also a pertinent point. Who knows what will follow? Day follows night, Vanguard follows Explorer follows Sputnik, but before the final fuse is lit man wants to know and he wants to escape.

Although the study of modern primitives (non-literates) is traditionally the province of anthropologists, most of the current stock of travel books are written by journalists, doctors, or just plain travelers. Anthropologists are so absorbed in the intricacies of kinship terminology, sexual habits, and the interrelationships of each part of a culture to its whole that they neglect to communicate their findings to any save colleagues. They should, in my opinion, not only prepare dust-collecting monographs but also write books aimed at general readers, who, because they seek, deserve to know. But alas! Few anthropologists have the talent, the time, or the inclination. Two recent exceptions are *The Seven Caves* by Carleton S. Coon (Alfred A. Knopf) and Francis Huxley's *Affable Savages* (Viking); the former about the Middle East, the latter about the Urubu tribe of the Brazilian rain forest. Generally, however, it is left for intelligent laymen, like Gavin Maxwell and Ian Stephens, to present such groups interestingly and with reasonable accuracy. *People of the Reeds* and *Horned Moon* are valuable sources for the anthropologist as well as escape mechanisms for the seeking public.

PEOPLE OF THE REEDS is a personal book, the book of a poet who sees, feels and describes. Whether he understands is less important. His words and prose are colorful and infectious, just as they were in his earlier books, *Bandit* (biography of Giuliano, the Sicilian bandit) and *Harpoon Venture* (a story of commercial shark fishing off the Hebrides). "The daylight faded altogether from the sky, and the stars came out and were reflected in the water as chips of silver that wriggled like tadpoles in the ripple of the paddles."

I have but one minor criticism: I sicken each time I read the "there I was where few white men had trod before" routine. Actually, several travelers' reports of these peoples, other than those of Wilfred Thesiger, have been published in the last twenty years: *The Blood Feud* by Captain C. E. Curry, 1938, and "Marsh People of Southern Iraq" by Lady Drower, *Royal Central Asian Society Journal,* Volume 34, 1947, are but two examples.

Maxwell's trip among the Marsh Arabs of South Iraq along with Thesiger, famed British explorer of Arabia, Iraq and Afghanistan and unlicensed medical practitioner, was an attempt to prove once again that man is man in spite of machines. Therefore, knowing about the Ma'dan tribesmen was secondary to being what the author would like to

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The Pride of Life

A Roman Setting

Old men discourse upon wise topics here:
Children and women pass the shadows by,
Only the young are desperate. Their clear
And unambiguous gazes strike
Against each brushing hand or eye,
Their faces like

O something far away, maybe a cave
Where looks and actions always moved to hunt,
Where every gesture knew how to behave
And there was never space between
The easy having and the want.
I think the keen

Primitive stares that pierce this decorous street
Look to some far back mood and time to claim
A life beyond the urbane and effete,
Where youth from coolest childhood came,
And look to look was like the hunter's throw—
Perpetually new and long ago.

ELIZABETH JENNINGS

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be—one who has lived away from the sprawling suburbia which England is fast becoming. He succeeds, both for his own and reader benefit. Maxwell is the center of the book. He cannot speak Arabic and feels as a child does listening to adult conversations. In this way, he accurately plays the role of Every-tourist. But with the help of his Arabic-speaking companion and his own acute sense of the real and now, Maxwell generally keeps himself in the background and the attention of the reader focused on the Ma'dan. Toward the end of the book, his flirtation with an otter (female, of course) is very touching—and here the reader leaves Iraq for the universal.

BUT the bulk of the book specifically discusses the Marsh Arabs, their environment, their neighbors; and, although Maxwell the man interests us, the Ma'dan interest us more. They are a relatively isolated tribe, living Venice-like existences, dependent on the reeds of the marshes for hut construction material and household containers, and on water buffaloes for dung (used as fuel and cement) and milk. They never use the buffaloes as draft animals, but occasionally sell them to buy grain. The Ma'dan fish with poison and five-pronged spears which they throw very inaccurately. The semi-nomadic Berbera, tribal neighbors on the edge of the marshes, fish with nets from canoes. The Ma'dan refuse to adapt this system and consider it effete, thus rejecting a much more efficient subsistence method.

This is not the place to dig into personal theories which I cannot substantiate, but I believe that few peoples consciously select cultural items which will assist them in their efforts to survive in the world's great and little struggles. Man, being rational and emotional, selects those cultural items which lead to his downfall: the American Indian chose the horse and rifle from the Spaniard: new items which only hastened the destruction of the buffalo and the Indian. The nuclear way of life could possibly lead to the stars, *if* we don't destroy ourselves first.

Maxwell seems surprised at the cleanliness of the Marsh Arabs, in spite of certain customs which, on the surface, appear unappetizing. The mat floors of the semi-cylindrical mat huts are kept spotlessly clean, and no one wears shoes indoors. Maxwell and Thesiger stayed only a short time (one night if possible) in the *mudhif* or guest house of a village. Hospitality is expensive among a people living at a basic subsistence level when each visitor calls for elaborate feasting.

Children of nature never live in paradise. Maxwell recalls fleas, mosquitoes, dysentery, sons fighting fathers, brothers fighting brothers, and most frightening of all—the danger of the wild pig, which when killed cannot even be eaten because all Muslims consider the pig unclean. The wild pig of the South Iraqi marshes is not the puny creature of the Indian subcontinent; adults reach the size of small donkeys and they attack without provocation. Maxwell himself was set upon by a large pig but miraculously escaped.

The groups surrounding these primitive Venetians are also interesting. The Shadda, Faraijat and Suwaid, all living near the Iranian border, are part-time smugglers who ferry illegal (untaxed) grain into the marsh lands from Iran. The Sabians or Mandeans, who live to the north of the marshes, have been famed as boat builders since before the Christian era. These strange (to Christians) people believe that Christ was an impostor and that John the Baptist is the true Messiah.

Maxwell introduces us to all these peoples—as well as himself. Often he sulks, and admits it. He knows nothing about the area, yet learns to appreciate it. We leave the book with a sense of being—not of knowing, and I think that is the author's intention. We have been with Maxwell on his journey and have a healthy respect for both the author and his Arab friends. He gives us no noble savages to emulate or envy but rather a people adapted and adapting to their own time and place, ever seeking but never finding equilibrium in their lives—or he in his.

IAN STEPHENS' *Horned Moon* is broader in scope. It deals with national and international problems, but throughout the book Stephens retains his human approach and bombards his reader with anecdotes which give a taste of the true flavor of "Delkaria," a term which Stephens substitutes for the "Indo-Pakistani sub-continent," a phrase he deplores. "Del" is for Delhi, capital of India; "Kar" for Karachi, capital of Pakistan. I don't think the new term will stick; India and Pakistan seem unconfusingly adequate names.

Stephens spent twenty-one years in India, nine of them as editor of the influential newspaper *The Statesman*, published in both Delhi and Calcutta. He left India in 1951 after bouts with his conscience and Lord Louis Mountbatten, whom Stephens thought excessively pro-Indian (as opposed to Pakistan) when he served as the last British Viceroy to India and the first Governor General of independent India.

Stephens published several editorials which were considered unfavorable by the Indians. Actually Stephens had criticized both India and Pakistan for disrupting Commonwealth unity with their 1947-49 undeclared war in Kashmir. But the Indians refused to listen to a calm, sensible voice. "So sensitive themselves, they [the Hindus] can be strangely insensitive to what is happening in non-Hindu minds."

Horned Moon (referring to the cres-

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cent on Pakistan's national flag) gives an eloquent statement of the Kashmir problem as seen through the eyes of one who, though sympathetic to both sides, believes Pakistan the less guilty of two guilty parties.

Structurally, *Horned Moon* is loosely based on a 1952 return trip by Stephens to West Pakistan, Kashmir and Afghanistan. He reminisces easily and his breezy travelogue style, coupled with searching political interviews and statements, give the book an exciting drive. We are introduced to fierce Pathans, gentle Kashmiri Muslims, energetic Punjabis, sun-baked Sindhis, Mongoloid Gilgitis, ever-mysterious, ever-hospitable Afghans, and the best mountaineering cragmen in the world—the Hunzawals and Nagarwals.

One thing which always amazes me about British travel books is the ease with which their authors, be they journalists or administrators, identify birds and plants. In my travels in the Middle East and South Asia, I have difficulty identifying anything beyond crows, vultures and roses. My admiration for these flora and fauna name-droppers is unbounded.

Very rarely, Stephens seems to square his shoulders and hit his hand with the riding crop of British superiority, but these instances serve only to humanize the book further, for his sympathy and love for the peoples of Delkaria are genuine.

Many things have occurred since the author's 1952 trip: (1) Pakistan has changed prime ministers several times and finally has a constitution; (2) Pakistan has committed herself to the Western bloc of SEATO and has signed arms aid alliances with the United States; (3) Abdullah, first pro-Indian and then pro-independence Governor of Kashmir, was jailed, recently released and is now in danger of being jailed again; (4) India has accepted the "demands?" of the Kashmiri peoples and integrated Indian-occupied Kashmir into the Indian union, and so forth. It is hoped that Mr. Stephens will visit the Indo-Pakistani sub-continent once again and give us his perspective on these events and their effects on the peoples.

YES, as he begins to probe into space, man is also seeking back in time and probing into current cultural patterns different from his own. The travel books reflect his dual curiosity, for to reach strange places, air travel is usually necessary. Both Maxwell and Stephens write glowingly of aircraft rides, Stephens ecstatically so. Many pages in *Horned Moon* would do honor to Saint Exupéry. In writing of his jet ride: "More surprising is the sense of lost dangers, of an almost obscene nakedness, each time you look out sideways and realize, with a fresh shock, that there are no propellers."

So are we all—those of us who can read, write and think—seeking something and everything before we disappear with a whimper or stand defiant, listening to the last ding-dong of destiny.

Anxiety

April. Cold
Winds leach the gold
Of the sun, white
Clouds stop the light.
The torn sky rages;
And what assuages
A grief of reason
Now in this season?

April. Pale hills
And the daffodils,
Willow and brook,
Cry, "Look, look,"
Where he, the walker,
The dumb self-stalker,
Staggers, tip-toe,
Avid to know
And fearful to tread
His path of dread;
Wind, sun
Cry, "Hoo, poor one
Walking the meadow—
Where is your shadow?"

April. A tree
Cries, "I," the free
And certain swallows
Skim the hollows,
Sufficient as air
Everywhere.
The great earth
Heaves in rebirth
In April, freeing
Anthems of being,
Atom, planet,
Petal or granite,
Identities singing
Like crazy bell-ringing.

But person is gone.
The walker steps on,
Wired by pain
To his bones, insane
In the shrieking danger
Of loss, of anger;
He runs in the meadow
Where he casts no shadow.
And the separate wits
Of his brain are bits
Of memory falling,
Crying, and calling.
And in the cold spring
The wind is singing.

HAYDEN CARRUTH

Holiday Journal

JOURNEY TO JAVA. By Harold Nicolson. Doubleday & Co. 335 pp. $5.

Richard Church

BEFORE commenting on this book, I must confess to being a person uncommonly fascinated by good prose. I am therefore liable to be over-partial to this author's virtues, and perhaps too lenient toward his faults. For he has faults. He can be facetious, adopting a bantering manner toward people and events that gives a false impression of conceit and a superiority complex. This is unfair to himself, for by the quality of his mind, shown in his wide experience of men and affairs, his sound and patiently accumulated scholarship, his humility in the face of real quality, and above all in his loyalty to friends and to the establishment of truth, he reveals a character that is endearing. That all this can be discovered in his writing is a testimony to its quality. The temporary affectations here and there have to be accepted as no more than the demonstration of a still unconquered diffidence, which must be deeply rooted in him, not to be hidden even by the worldly wisdom acquired during a long professional career in the British diplomatic service and in politics.

This book is the journal of a holiday. It is a long thanks letter to the two hundred and fifty-five friends who "conspired to give me an enormous cheque. I decided to spend this present on a visit to the Far East which I had not seen before. V. and I sailed from England in the liner Willem Ruys of the Rotterdam Lloyd on January 15, 1957, and returned on March 17. It is to the generosity of my friends that I owe two of the happiest months which, in a life of wholly unmerited felicity, I have ever enjoyed."

The occasion was his seventieth birthday, and the V. who accompanied him was his wife, the distinguished English poet Vita Sackville-West, the Lady of Sissinghurst Castle in Kent, where may be found one of the most beautiful gardens in Europe.

That phrase, "in a life of wholly unmerited felicity" is a direct revelation of the personality of the man. All writers open the gates of self in this

RICHARD CHURCH is a British novelist, poet and critic. The first two volumes of his autobiography, Over the Bridge *and* The Golden Sovereign *have recently been published here.*

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way, sooner or later, even though they may have been trained in another profession to habits of caution, reserve, evasion and all the devices of ceremony and protocol. A man who has served in the Foreign Service of his country is likely to be imprisoned within this technique. That is why the autobiographies of so many ambassadors are noncommittal and dull.

Sir Harold Nicolson is a rare exception. I suspect that he has always been the literary artist first, and the diplomat second. The literary world is the richer. His candor is disarming, and sometimes it is disconcerting, for he can be feline in his sudden bursts of ferocity. The velvet paw draws blood, under the instant and taloned caress, whenever this shrewd critic believes himself to be confronted with pretentiousness and humbug. Sometimes, as in his dislike of the divine genius of Oliver Goldsmith, he can scratch unfairly. But we all have our prejudices, and they often serve to complete the self-portrait we are engaged upon from birth to death. In sudden fits of spleen Sir Harold refuses to suffer fools and bores gladly. But that may be a healthy reaction from a career in which he had to disguise such emotions.

GENERALLY, that felicity of which he writes is his normal mood. He is so fundamentally humble-minded however, that he comments hesitantly upon this blessing. "I always have the feeling that, considering that we live in a world of chaos and transition, I ought to be more unhappy than I am. I have protected myself from this form of self-reproach by the reflection that the average human being is capable of absorbing only an average amount of worry; he is a vessel of a certain capacity and if more is poured into the vessel than it is designed to contain then the liquid overflows."

Such is the man who sets out to tell us of his journey to Java, in the company of a wife of whom he says "what have I done that I should have been given so enchanting a companion through my life?" In order to supply a perspective to the two months of hedonism, Sir Harold proposed to set himself the task of finding, by contemplation, the origins of what he calls "causeless melancholy," that condition once included amongst the seven deadly sins under the name of *accidie*. Against the touchstone of this inquiry, he observes his fellow passengers, and in the course of this contrast between objective and subjective activity, we are given a gallery of brilliant portraits, including one that I suspect is an imaginary projection, on whose synthetic character the author loads much philosophic speculation and many distastes. This man, whom he calls Sidney Culpeper, is a rich dilettante who collects jade and despises the middle and lower classes (as he anachronistically calls them). But in the end, even this contemptible person is revealed as a man with a secret agony and a patent virtue, and the author apologizes for his acid delineation.

The philosophic inquiry, after ransacking the whole of Sir Harold's scholarship, worldly experience and present environment, comes to the conclusion that there is no such condition as "causeless melancholy." With Lucretian common-sense, Sir Harold decides that depression must have some origin in defective health, either mental or more probably physical. His own epicurean tendency in taste and inclination thus comes to the fore, exposing him as a civilized sophisticate with a determined distaste for zealotry and mysticism. He would have washed his hands in the same bowl as Pilate.

It is not easy to discuss the circumstances of the tour. Travelogues are usually tedious, but Sir Harold, by his device of leavening the sight-seeing and ocean voyage with his wide-ranging speculations about life and letters, avoids all *longeurs*. Further, his expert literary skill enables him to paint word-pictures of the phosphorescent phenomena of the sea, and of oriental cities and landscapes, that are wholly acceptable to the armchair traveler.

Nuit Blanche

Blind for the lamp she's smashed and the riving tears,
She who, one by one,
Fetches up griefs like stones
The quiet years have mossed
And heaves them far far off;
Riven, shriven wakes her
To passion's dank black crater
And her griefs, dead-ahead, fallow for the light-foot years.

KATHERINE HOSKINS

Lion Feuchtwanger's

monumental new novel of the man, Jephta, is an immediate best seller. It has received the 1958 Munich Prize, and arrangements are under way to publish it in Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, Danish, Finnish, Dutch, Yugoslav, Czech, Polish, Hebrew, French, Swedish, Norwegian and Japanese editions.

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An Englishman on Cyprus

BITTER LEMONS. By Lawrence Durrell. E. P. Dutton & Co. 251 pp. $3.50.

Jane Stolle

BOOKS about "life among the natives" are often misleading. The author either pokes fun at the "ridiculous rustics" in his adopted country, or idealizes them as "noble savages" beyond all credible proportions. The books may be entertaining reading for armchair travelers, but they are seldom authentic. If we are going to have to get along with our little brown, yellow and white brothers throughout the world because sputnik tells us so, we are better off understanding them than teasing or adoring them. What are their problems? How do they deal with them? And, since it seems we will have to deal with their problems too, what is our role?

Lawrence Durrell does not purport, according to his preface to *Bitter Lemons,* to answer those questions about his neighbors on the island of Cyprus.

"This is not a political book," he says, "but simply a somewhat impressionistic study of the moods and atmospheres of Cyprus during the troubled years 1953-56."

Durrell is modest. In poetic yet incisive prose, he not only brings the Cypriots vividly alive, but traces the emergence of the Enosis question—their "problem"—from the wine-shop conversation stage to its ugly, active terrorist evolution. But, all the time, he is concerned with the human reactions to those events, not just the events themselves, and strangely, there is much comfort to be found in their tragic unfolding. Man, Durrell implies, if given a chance, may be the best anti-missile missile after all.

Durrell, an English novelist and poet who speaks fluent Greek, renovated and moved in to an old villa in the village of Bellapaix. Because he spoke their language and respected their simple ways, the villagers did not consider him one of "the enemy," the British governing body. In fact, Durrell says, the Cypriots' fight with England had so little basis in animosity that the whole thing seemed unreal at times.

"Here, too [in the school where he taught], bloomed that extraordinary flower of chance, the quixotic irrational love of England . . . and in a fantastic sort of way it flowered in blissful coexistence with the haunting dream of Union with Greece. The portrait of Byron, for example, in the great hall, at the head of the whiskered team of shepherds and farmers whose efforts brought freedom for Greece. . . . England, they said, sent her greatest poet to help them raise the flag. He died for Greece and England—they are both not countries but symbols of liberty incarnate."

But, sparked by the violently anti-British EOKA terrorist minority and kindled by British refusal even to consider the nationalists' demands, the Cypriot sentiment switched reluctantly from Byron to bombs. England lost its opportunity to channel the traditional pro-British feeling into a compromise—satisfactory, Durrell feels, to both sides.

Nevertheless—and comfortingly—the obstinate and unwavering friendship of Durrell's fellow villagers did not falter, even when he joined "the enemy" as press officer to the British colonial office on the island in order to do what he could as liaison between the opposing factions. They, who had gently discussed Enosis with him in the wine-shops, now spoke only of less painful things. They followed him, unobtrusively and unbidden, when he went out at night to protect him from "the crazy ones." They watched over his house while he worked for "the enemy." Though they believed in Enosis, they did not betray their values as moral human beings.

What can we learn from Durrell as to our role in other troubled spots of the world, on other Cypruses? Perhaps, that a little early understanding, a genuine identification with their problems and faith in "the natives" as moral human beings can, as well as "a tiny little bomb," move mountains.

JANE STOLLE has written, at various times, a weekly column in The New York Post *from Mexico, a column in the* Irish Independent *of Dublin from Rome, and has been a free-lance and subsequently staff writer for* The New York Times. *She lived and worked in Spain from 1951 until 1956.*

Section 3: LETTERS

The Artless Speaking Voice . . *by Horace Gregory*

ONE of the secrets of good letter-writing is the transference of the speaking voice to written words. It is an art disguised by an air of artlessness. That is why the letters Dorothy Osborne wrote 300 years ago to William Temple have endured. We overhear her talking to her future husband, telling him among other things of the kind of man she wishes to marry: "He must not be a fool of no sort, nor peevish, nor ill-natured, nor proud, nor covetous; and to all this must be added, that he must love me and I him as much as we are capable of loving." She herself was no fool, which was a compliment to him, and the tone of her voice on paper convinced him of her sincerity.

In the next century letter-writing flowered. Men and women of leisure took time out to write long, long letters. This habit became so securely fixed (for those who could write at all), so popular, that fashionable novelists—Samuel Richardson, Fanny Burney—told their stories in the form of letters written by their heroines. These fictional letters provided an illusion of being "true" beyond the resources of fiction. Artlessness was implied. Today our substitutes for this fictional device are to be found at their most naive levels in "true confessions" magazines, and lower still, in "confidential" reporting, or in "autobiographies" of actresses "retold" by publicity men.

The best of letters do contain an

HORACE GREGORY is the author of Selected Poems; D. H. Lawrence: Pilgrim of Apocalypse; *in collaboration with Marya Zaturenska,* A History of American Poetry, 1900-1940. *He is translator of* The Poems of Catullus *and, to be published in the fall, a new version of Ovid's* Metamorphoses. *His biography of Amy Lowell will also appear in the fall.*

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illusion of life that exists beyond the provinces of art. In the nineteenth century, Edward Fitzgerald had a way of talking to his friends in letters that transcended what we usually define as Victorian prose. In our day that same transcendence is to be met in the letters of D. H. Lawrence; the "artless" speaking voice is overheard.

Some few of Henry James's letters are memorable, and one I remember has far more obvious concern with social convention, with life as he felt and saw it, than with his art. One summer afternoon in London in 1934, my wife and I were having tea (actually Scotch and soda) at the Kensington home of Violet Hunt. Miss Hunt was then well over seventy, but had kept her straight, "willowy" figure, her air of smartness. She wore a thin and clinging, un-English afternoon gown. A portrait of her, "willowy" and young, by Burne-Jones hung in the drawing room behind her. Her conversation, her manner were appropriate to the title of her autobiography, *My Flurried Years.*

"You're Americans," she said, "and Americans are snobbish. Perhaps you'd like to see a letter to me from Henry James, an old American friend of mine who made me very sad. He had invited me to one of his house-parties at Rye." She produced a slightly brown-edged sheet of blue note-paper. "And then he told me I couldn't come because that week I had eloped and was living in sin with Ford Madox Ford. Think of that! When I was younger, I could have married Oscar Wilde; I wanted to, but my mother wouldn't let me; she was so Victorian! Henry wrote to me: 'Dear Violet, you have broken the conventions; I cannot receive you at Rye, nor visit your house again.' Here, read it. And when he had last visited me, he left his umbrella behind. I never saw him again."

James had made his position clear. He had spoken; there was nothing more for him to say.

QUEEN Victoria had a great dislike for Gladstone because he seemed always to talk at her as though he were addressing a public meeting. Letters written for posterity in the Gladstone spirit seldom please those who receive them and almost never charm the readers of the future. The one exception that I remember is Dr. Johnson's famous letter to Lord Chesterfield. Lord Chesterfield's equally famous letters to his son, for me at least, have the taint of straining toward an immortality. Perhaps the son felt that taint; certainly he was unable to make use of the worldly advice. The letters were not written *to* him, but *at* him.

Those who receive letters hopefully, sometimes fearfully, assume that letters contain more truth than fiction. Both wary and unwary lovers are inclined not to doubt the love letters they receive. The same revelations of character, the same "honesty" are assumed in the reading of letters written by children, which however fanciful they may be, have the virtue of seeming spontaneous, unwilled, undesigned, undisguised. We are sometimes charmed by the obviously misspelled letter, finding in it signs of the ingenuous,

Birthday

For once arrived at the time fixed. To discover
That whatever it was is just over.
They disperse already, backs to the beholder,
Balancing, each, a long pole on his shoulder.

These, as their bearers go, wave slow farewells.
Behind them the usual litter, which this time tells
Nothing of what is ended. The turning faces
May talk of it still. Too far to catch their voices.

Too far to call. From the shoes upward they vanish
In nothing rising like water, till they finish,
Heads last, still walking slowly, bearing away on
No shoulders all horizons except one.

W. S. MERWIN

Important Books That Others Did Not Dare to Print

Seven years ago, on a Sunday afternoon in Central Park, the editors of *Monthly Review* found I. F. Stone in a pessimistic mood. One commercial publisher after another had rejected his manuscript on *The Hidden History of the Korean War.* Almost on the spot we decided to become publishers of good books that were politically or socially unacceptable to the established houses.

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the innocent, the hopeful. This is indeed artless. But in our enthusiasm we had better not forget the genius that has made possible the best of letter writers: D. H. Lawrence writing of his mother's death to Rachel Annand Taylor, Dorothy Osborne writing to Temple of why and how she thrust the letters of an earlier and rejected lover into the fire, Fitzgerald writing on Mozart to Frederic Tennyson, Horace Walpole writing on the "Cock Lane Ghost" to Sir Horace Mann, or even Henry James's refusal to see Violet Hunt. None carries in it the taint of being written for posterity; in each the air of artlessness and of being written to the one who received it is preserved. In some of them their "truth" is both more immediate and enduring than in less gifted, yet deliberate efforts at writing fiction. In them the art that conceals art remains supreme.

The Non-Corporeal Friend

THE LETTERS OF EMILY DICKINSON. Editor, Thomas H. Johnson; Associate editor, Theodora Ward. Harvard University Press. 3 vols. 999 pp. $25.

Dilys Laing

"A LETTER always seems to me like immortality because it is the mind alone without corporeal friend." So runs a typically iambic and aphoristic line in a letter from Emily Dickinson to Thomas Wentworth Higginson in 1869.

We, who cannot have the poet for corporeal friend, can now abundantly "obtrude . . . on her divine Majority" by means of her poems and letters. A notable publishing venture begun in 1955 with three volumes of the poems, edited by Thomas H. Johnson, is now brought to its triumphant completion in three companion volumes of her letters, edited by Mr. Johnson in association with Theodora Ward. Among the many virtues of this work, its completeness will most recommend it to scholars and librarians. All known holographs as well as previously published items of Emily Dickinson's prose—whether letters or fragments—are here arranged in an order as nearly chronological as possible with items that were seldom dated after 1850. These amount to some 1150 pieces. There are about 100 letters never before published, and the editors have been able to restore many letters previously printed with deletions. An admirably reticent but thorough annotation follows each letter.

The earliest letter, innocent of any punctuation except the dash, was written in the poet's twelfth year to her brother Austin at school. All the writing of her adolescence reveals a high-spirited, affectionate girl reveling in family nonsense and normally responsive to ideas of love and piety. In a letter to Austin from Mount Holyoke in 1848 Emily struck two notes that were to characterize the rest of her life: "All, all are kind to me but their tones fall strangely on my ear & their countenances meet mine not like home faces." She expressed relief that she was not to return to school after the one year, and bade Austin tell a friend that she was "pining for a Valentine."

Home became her world and she never ceased to write, or pine for, valentines trivial or serious. The corporeal, and therefore mortal, friend was often too much for her. The immortal distillation in words of wit and affection was what she needed as fuel for her genius, even before that genius discovered poetry to be its means of life. This perhaps partly explains her later passion for the mysterious lover now fairly conclusively identified as the Reverend Charles Wadsworth, a married man. The very necessity for renunciation—"a piercing virtue"—made him a suitable candidate.

STIRRED by the religious movements in Amherst which claimed her father and many of her friends, she never became "a Christian" in the revivalist sense. She wrote to Helen Hunt Jackson in 1885: "Would that I knew how to pray . . . but I am a Pagan." Nevertheless the passion for discipleship was strong in her and she knelt to two men in her lifetime with unabashed humility. One was Higginson, whom she asked to be her preceptor, and to whom she usually signed herself "Your Scholar." The other was the Reverend Wadsworth. The one brief note known to exist from him to her is included in the collection. None of her letters to him escaped destruction, so far as is now known, but several drafts of passionate letters addressed to one whom she called "Master" are concluded to have been meant for him.

Her later romantic attachment to Judge Lord, her father's friend, was on more equal terms. With him she evidently came closer to a normal human relationship with a "corporeal friend" than ever in her life. Her father, whom Higginson described as "not severe but I should think remote," was not one to whom she knelt. She merely gave him the customary filial deference of the times, and he in return apparently honored in his daughter the need for renunciation of the non-essential, for the sake of the essence, which he knew in himself.

Emily Dickinson referred several times to Chillon. In 1864 she wrote to her sister Lavinia: "You remember the Prisoner of Chillon did not know Liberty when it came, and asked to go back to Jail." Twenty-two years later she wrote to Higginson after the death of their great friend, Helen Hunt Jackson, "I think she would rather have stayed with us, but perhaps she will learn the customs of Heaven, as the Prisoner of Chillon of Captivity." Emily Dickinson's Chillon was of her own choosing, and so was her tyrant. One wonders what would have been the fate of her poems during her lifetime had she sent them to a critic more daring than Higginson who, recognizing their originality, shrank from a prosody so foreign to that of the period and dissuaded her from publication.

AMONGST the few letters by others in the collection there is one from Higginson to his wife, written during a visit to Amherst in 1870. It provides an unexcelled picture of the poet as seen by a friend who held her in a high regard that fell far short of adulation. A few excerpts:

> A step like a pattering child's in entry and in glided a little plain woman with two smooth bands of reddish hair . . . in a very plain & exquisitely clean white pique and a blue net worsted shawl. She came to me with two day lilies which she put in a sort of childlike way into my hand & said in a soft frightened breathless childlike voice — "These are my introduction" — and added under her breath Forgive me if I am frightened; I never see strangers & hardly know what I say—but she talked soon & thenceforward continuously — & deferentially — sometimes stopping to ask me to talk instead of her — but readily recommencing.
>
> I never was with anyone who drained my nerve power so much.

DILYS LAING is the author of a novel, The Great Year, *and three books of verse:* Another England, Birth Is Farewell *and* Walk Through Two Landscapes.

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Without touching her, she drew from me. I am glad not to live near her. She often thought me *tired* & seemed very thoughtful of others.

There are nearly three printed pages of these notes. The letter has had previous publication but one is grateful to find it here.

Gradually, as death after death, or other loss of friends, struck at her too death-haunted spirit, her high, word-drunken gaiety purified itself into darting wit, compressed itself into aphorism, sometimes telling, sometimes merely sententious, and above all, disciplined itself into poetry. Many of the letters, especially the extravagant ones to her sister-in-law, Susan Gilbert Dickinson, descend to a sentimentalism and adulation embarrassing to us, if not to those who read them first. But the epistolary style departed more and more from prose and became an intensely personal language differing little in imagery and prosody from the formal poems.

Emily Dickinson's sense of election expressed itself early (1846) in a letter to Abiah Root: "I wonder if we shall know each other in heaven, and whether we shall be a chosen band as we are here." In 1862 it displayed itself urgently in her poems, especially in the great one beginning:

> The Soul selects her own Society
> Then shuts the Door—
> On her divine Majority—
> Obtrude no more—

In the same year the same feeling was given an inverted, or oblique, expression in these words to Higginson: "If fame belonged to me I could not escape her—if she did not, the longest day would pass me by on the chase—and the approbation of my dog would forsake me—then—My barefoot rank is better."

The great ones have an intuition of their greatness. Emily Dickinson must have known, deep down, that fame belonged to her. These three volumes of her letters, with the three companion volumes of her poems, are her latest assurance of an approbation far less limited, though not less faithful, than the one she named.

'What I Mean Is . . .'

DYLAN THOMAS: LETTERS TO VERNON WATKINS. Editor, Vernon Watkins. New Directions, 144 pp. $3.

Vivian Mercier

DYLAN THOMAS died in what Dante would have considered middle age; I suppose that is why everybody compares him to Keats, who died indisputably young. Yet it would be affectation on my part not to compare some of his letters to Vernon Watkins with some of Keats's. The moment one starts to make the comparison, one sees what is missing: Thomas expresses hardly a single general idea. In one hundred-and-twenty pages we find nothing that could stand for a moment beside Keats's "I am certain of nothing but of the holiness of the heart's affections, and the truth of Imagination. What the Imagination seizes as Beauty must be Truth, whether it existed before or not. . . ."; or beside "A poet is the most unpoetical of anything in existence, because he has no identity. . . ." Not that Thomas was incapable of such ideas—these two in particular were perhaps implicit in every poem he wrote—but that he saved them for his poetry and there expressed them in symbolic rather than discursive language.

These letters, then, do not offer us a philosophy of poetry—perhaps only because of that current fetish, specialization—but in two other respects they are equal or superior to Keats's: their intense, exaggerated awareness of life and their quasi-religious devotion to the "craft or sullen art" of poetry.

Compare, for comic exaggeration, Keats's attack on the men of Devon with Thomas' wartime summations of Sussex, of Beaconsfield ("where Chesterton sat on his R.C."), and of the mean village "where everyone goes into the pubs sideways, & the dogs piss only on back-doors, and there are more unwanted babies shoved up the chimneys than there are used french letters in the offertory boxes."

Compare too, for simplicity and strength, these words from Thomas with any of Keats's *cris du coeur:* "My own news is very big and simple. I was married three days ago; to Caitlin Macnamara; in Penzance registry office; with no money, no prospect of money, no attendant friends or relatives, and in complete happiness."

VIVIAN MERCIER teaches English and Comparative Literature at the Baruch School of City College of New York. He is an Irish citizen and joint editor of One Thousand Years of Irish Prose.

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In their devotion to poetry and painstaking commentary on work in progress, these letters outstrip not only Keats's but also Yeats's famous series to Dorothy Wellesley. I particularly admire some of the comments on Watkins' poems—or, rather, early drafts of poems. This, for example: "What I mean is, the whole line seems a kind of tired indrawing of breath between loud & strong utterances. And I've always disliked the weak line. I admit that readers of complicated poetry do need a breather every now and then, but I don't think the poetry should give it to them. When they want one, they should take it and then go on." Or this: "All the words are lovely, but they *seem* so *chosen,* not struck out. I can see the sensitive picking of words, but none of the strong, inevitable pulling that makes a poem an event, a happening, an action perhaps. . . ." Then there are his replies to Watkins' criticisms (What a pity that the other half of this correspondence has not survived!), always grateful for "your complete intellectual honesty" but sometimes firm: "I think you are liable, in your criticisms of me, to underrate the value—or, rather, the integrity, the wholeness—of what I am saying or trying to make clear that I am saying, and often to suggest alterations or amendments for purely musical motives." Best of all is a vindication of his own later manner from a 1945 letter: "Thank God, writing is daily more difficult . . . and that the result, if only to you and me, is worth all the discarded shocks, the reluctantly shelved grand moony images, cut-&-come again cardpack of references."

WATKINS' reputation both as a man and as a poet stands to gain enormously from the publication of these letters—one of the reasons, probably, why he at first decided not to publish them. He strikes one as a completely decent human being, able to bring out the best in anybody and particularly in Thomas. Having been called by Dylan (even though "with a kind of giggling gravity") "the only other poet except me whose poetry I really like today" would guarantee practically anybody a ledge on Parnassus in the 50s. But to have been told by Dylan that "We know each other by doing so many things together, from croquet to bathing . . . in the icy moon, poetry and very high teas, getting drunk, reading, reading, reading, sea staring, Swansea, Gower, Laugharne, London . . ." doubtless promotes Watkins to the contemporary Olympus.

This correspondence will of course prove a "mine" for biographers and commentators. I could find it in my heart to hope that Olsons unfledged and Brinnins yet unborn will be trapped in its galleries by rock-falls or blown up by firedamp. What I prefer to think of is this little volume's effect on poets who are now twenty-one, as I was twenty-one when *Letters on Poetry from W. B. Yeats to Dorothy Wellesley* appeared. (How was I to know then that I was not a poet?) I like to think, too, of its effect on future poets who will read it when they are fifteen or eighteen or twenty-one. May it give them the precept and the example of poetic vocation that Yeats gave to the 40s and Keats to many a decade before that.

Section 4: SATIRE

IN THE following section we publish a group of essays on Satire in present-day life and art. The echoes of opinion and example running through this symposium are the more remarkable because the contributors were selected to provide a variety of background and preoccupation. Frank O'Connor is the great Irish story teller; Gore Vidal has managed while still in his youth to earn a reputation both as an avant-garde novelist and as a superior stage and television dramatist; William Esty is one of the most thoughtful of the young literary critics; Harold Clurman is a distinguished theatre director and critic, with the Group Theatre in his background and a present special affection for the French; Kenneth Rexroth, poet and effective champion of the dissidents in contemporary art, here admonishes those who would turn hard dissent into an easy cult.

Is This a Dagger? . . *by Frank O'Connor*

A.E., THE POET, lamented endlessly the absence of a satirist from modern Irish literature. Few editors have ever fathered more writers, but not one of us ever had in him a hint of Voltaire. Like a fond parent trying to interest his children in a constructional toy, he spouted great chunks of Heine at us, and then, seeing our blank looks, would say hopefully "Or perhaps you prefer Aristophanes? Don't you think a wonderful play could be written with De Valera as Cleon?" But we didn't, and A.E. went sadly away, leaving us to our puff-puffs. None of us could ever fashion a story or a play into a stiletto to run into the vitals of some pompous ass. Oliver Gogarty, like Brian O'Nolan of our own time, could make phrases that delighted everybody, but the phrases never concentrated themselves into the shape of a dagger; they were more like fireworks that spluttered and jumped all over the place, as much a danger to his friends as to his enemies. Irish anger is unfocused; malice for its own sweet sake, as in the days of the bards.

Signs on it, twenty-five years later we find the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin banning *Ulysses* and his colleague of Cork banning Santa Claus. (For the moment other legendary figures have escaped: the Bogey Man, the Easter Bunny and that sinister figure invoked by Irish mothers whose children toy with their food, the Baba with the Chuckchucks.) No, we had only one great satirist. Swift's anger is never unfocused; even in the mildest squib he will remember who his enemies are, and they are always powerful, always dangerous, and one reads him wondering how on earth he escaped a real dagger in his own guts. Swift is almost a definition of satire; the intellectual dagger opposing the real dagger, David face to face with Goliath; and though like Aristophanes and Rabelais he died in his bed, it was not that he didn't fight in the front line. Who knows what happened to Zoshchenko?

Perhaps that is why America seems to have so few satirists, and even Mencken seems a bit tame. The element of real danger is not

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sufficiently present. Satire is a liberal art, and modern American thought is drenched in a syrupy liberalism till even an old-fashioned liberal like myself doesn't know whether he's on his head or his heels. I read in my paper of some teen-age atrocity, and then I read a liberal journalist who smothers it all in golden syrup. This little pig had no father; this little pig had one; this little pig had a traumatic experience, and all of them yelled wee-wee-wee because they were being tortured by policemen trying to extract confessions from them. Clearly they are all liberal martyrs; and who could be more liberal than that liberal priesthood of psychologists who explain their funny little ways to us and warn us to understand rather than condemn? Isn't that what we ourselves have always preached? How can we who are liberals satirize good liberal doctrine? So we meekly submit to batteries of tests and only wince when we answer true or false to a question such as "Everything has turned out like the Bible and the Prophets said it would." We make our little protest on the side against the bad English or the bad logic, though without much effect. One philosophy student in a Southern college who did this had his paper returned marked PLEASE WRITE MORE LEGIBLE. We begin to wonder whether to a serious psychologist grammar and logic are anything more than inhibitions to be got rid of, but though we may end up wondering whether the liberal priesthood is any more inclined to literacy than the old, and even to doubt if it is liberal at all, we do not wish to be caught on the side of reaction with the dotty old ladies and gentlemen who sigh for hangings and floggings as an adolescent sighs for a passionate love affair. American liberals are stymied from the word go.

FOR reasons of their own the operators of the mass media bring us the same atmosphere of sweetness and light. They, poor creatures, have to or they lose their investments. Shakespeare's *Henry V* probably cost the equivalent of $250 to produce. Olivier's film of *Henry V* cost $3,000,000 and see what happens! All the bawdy jokes drop out! "Don't offend the old ladies!" is the motto. Publishers of Shakespeare's day were liable to lose their ears over a satire, but at least they appear to have been more reckless with their ears than modern publishers are with their Cadillacs. The capital required for radio, movies and television is so colossal that no poor writer could get near it and no banker in his senses would advance $100 on anything that was liable to offend anybody, and so we bring our children up in a moral atmosphere that never rises above the level of cops and robbers.

But satire is disappearing in Europe as well, and that this is no mere fancy can be proved by the changing attitude of the courts of law. Just pick up a copy of George Moore's *Hail and Farewell;* read again the satirical descriptions of Martyn, Gill and Plunkett and, without bothering to ask yourself if any publisher today would publish it, ask yourself what the damages would be if he did. Damages for so-called libels have become so preposterous in England and Ireland that the English have had to legislate against them, and no insurance company will even quote a rate for insuring publisher and author against "libels" concerning Irish people. The legislation merely proves the trend—more damn sweetness and light! Everybody had better love everybody else or —. But the Russians are our real masters in the new art of politeness. Damages in a Russian libel case are liable to be final.

My one great hope of the mass media was that sooner or later they would be bound to give printing its *coup de grâce* and that literature would have to begin all over again as simple manuscript material; that happy in our anonymity, we should write our satires on the Bishop of Cork and attribute them to someone equally powerful and respectable, and that a new order of scribes would grow up who would retail copies at black-market rates. No more 500,000-word novels about the American Civil War; no more sweetness and light! I had even hoped that I might have discovered an antidote to organizational man. But now I see only too clearly what organizational man will do with my attempts at disruption—fingerprint every man and woman known to be able to read and write (these will soon be few enough) and then, heigh-ho for the great state trial, and the imaginative sentence to end all imaginative sentences — 965 years' imprisonment and a fine of $50,000,000! "Everything has turned out like the Bible and the Prophets said it would."

The Unrocked Boat

Gore Vidal

MR. MALCOLM MUGGERIDGE has recently proposed that satire tends to flourish at those times when the Establishment is confident that its eternal truths and verities (to borrow Mr. Faulkner's most famed redundancy) are indeed eternal and therefore impervious to ill-natured wit. Mr. Muggeridge concludes that in an age like ours (other-directed, hydrogen-haunted, artificially tranquilized and doggedly togethered) satire is more apt to take than administer a beating. Now he is right in one thing: satire has taken a beating. It hardly exists in the more public art forms and except for an occasional timid appearance in the novel or on a night club floor (I refer now to the curious magic of Mort Sahl, a new politically-minded comedian whose eclectic wit is happily communicable to the young), satire has seldom thrived in our perennially comfortable land. But I suggest that the reasons for this are precisely the opposite of those Mr. Muggeridge gives. In the first place, he underestimates the very real complacency of our culture which despite lowering political weather —those atom bombs again—traditionally holds that boats in any weather are best left unrocked. And, secondly, it would appear to me that satire, historically, has been most useful—and most used—when the moral and religious assumptions of a people about itself are in a state of serious confusion because of some dramatic change for good or ill in that people's fortunes.

As his world and city fell, Aristophanes attacked a demoralized war-minded Establishment which did not long survive him. As the Roman Republic disintegrat-

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ed, Cicero satirized radicals, Catullus satirized the mysteriously amiable Caesar, and Horace ticked off a number of highly placed bores—all this in a time of proscription and violent change. Later, under the Empire, Petronius and Lucan though good courtiers had the bad luck to find the Divine Nero irresistibly funny, their satiric thrusts rewarded with the optimum of Roman prizes: that ineluctable warm bath with open veins. Those were not, to say the least, complacent days. Nor can one argue that, fierce palace politics aside, the Roman imperium ever rested on certain common assumptions confidently held. Beyond a glum acceptance of law as necessary to commercial endeavor and the accidental discovery that government is largely a matter of filing and cross-indexing, the Roman state from Sulla to Constantine was gloriously confused in its morality, politics and religion. Confronted by so many rich absurdities and contradictions, satire became a high and useful art: Persius, Juvenal, Martial, even St. Paul; though between fatal baths and confinement upon disagreeable islands, the satirists themselves did not always have too good a time of it.

THE Christian victory, though it did not precisely bring peace on earth, did at least manage to put a severe leash on the satiric impulse. There are not many recorded attacks on the Church between the Emperor Julian's death and the Reformation, a millennium which — though marked by the usual wars of aggression as well as a number of odd religious wars (something new under the sun)—qualified supremely, in the West at least, as a period of firmly entrenched spiritual values and therefore a seedbed, one would think, for satire. Yet it was not; and the truth of the matter of course is that no well-organized central administration, temporal or spiritual, is apt to allow its beneficiaries the license of laughter at its own expense. Cardinals are not funny in Ireland or in Spain today, at least not publicly. Even in America, they must write particularly bad verse to occasion a wary joke or two. Yet in France and Italy, two nations which have been for some time in a euphoric state of moral and political confusion, Cardinals are stock figures of comedy, cropping up in numerous jokes, good and bad, malicious and amiable. I worry the Roman Church only because it is an elderly institution of great significance morally and therefore an obvious target for useful satire. At present, in America, it is not.

Now I would propose that the United States in its short history has been much too preoccupied uniting and exploring, pioneering and building, inventing and consuming, to give much thought to anything not relevant to the practical and immediate. Not that we have lacked for harsh critics; in fact, most of our country's better writers have been nay-sayers, deploring the day and resolutely pessimistic about tomorrow. On the other hand, our humorists have been jolly and ubiquitous. We all know, rather wearily, about frontier humor. Mark Twain's jokes go on and on and some are funny but none is truly satiric because he was not one to rock the boat. It was his ordeal to be tamed, and the petulance and bitterness of the final *What Is Man?* answers as nothing else could why he did not dare question any of his society's basic assumptions.

Henry James observed that it took a great deal of history to make a little bit of literature; and I suspect it takes a far more homogeneous, more settled, yet more uneasy society to produce satirists. And if one is to be met by the argument that God forbid things be any worse simply to make matters easier for one small department of literature, I would be the first to agree that the benign incompetence of the Great Golfer and his Team is certainly preferable to a touchy Nero or even to an inscrutable Caesar.

Yet there is a real need for the satirist in our affairs, especially now. Since the Second World War and its horrors there has been a remarkable change in our society. Anti-Semitism seems happily to have vanished, except among the more irritable Jews, while anti-Catholics no longer smile, at least in mixed religious company, when the Vatican certifies that the sun did a dance over Portugal. Even my Southern relatives employ a certain tact in discussing The Problem. A profound tolerance is in the land—a tolerance so profound that it is not in its effect entirely unlike terror. One dares not raise one's voice against any religion, idea or even delinquency if it is explicable by a therapist. I suspect much of the American's hatred of Russia and communism is simply a siphoning off of other irrational dislikes which, blocked by the stern tolerance of the day, can find expression only in Communist-baiting. Now one does not propose that we return to the bad old days of holding people responsible for inherited characteristics. Yet one should like to learn tolerance from within and not have it imposed from without. And to put forward, a recklessly anti-egalitarian proposition: As long as any group within the society deliberately maintains its identity it is, or should be, a fair target for satire—both for its own good and for the society's. Laughing at someone else is an excellent way of learning how to laugh at oneself; and questioning what seem to be the absurd beliefs of another group is a good way of recognizing the potential absurdity of many of one's own cherished beliefs, witness the travels of Gulliver.

IT IS generally agreed and officially lamented that we are in a new age of conformity; youth wants security, not adventure; the great questions are not asked because the realization that there are no absolute answers has at last penetrated to the bottom layer of society—and why be curious if the answers are only tentative? Now, if this time is indeed so bland, then according to Muggeridge's law, satire must flourish. Yet satire hardly exists; in perfect comfort the squares grow ever more rectilinear. And, to strike the minatory note, if ever there was a people ripe for dictatorship it is the American people today. Should a home-grown Hitler appear, whose voice amongst the public orders would be raised against him in derision? Certainly no voice on television: sorry, the fellow has a lot of admirers; yes, we know he's bad news but you can't hurt people's feelings, you know. They buy soap, too. And elsewhere there would be the tolerant reflex: well, he *could* be right; after all a lot of people seem to agree with him. . . . And then the iron fist closes and we start *our* Empire.

I have often chided my Soviet friends on the naïveté of their country's censorship. Newly literate and still awed by the printed word, the Russian governors are terrified of ideas. If only they knew what our governors know: that in a massive egalitarian society no idea which runs counter to the prevailing superstitions can successfully penetrate the official carapace. We give our solemn critics every freedom, including the one to fail. And fail they do: silence and indifference neutralize the irritant more effectively than brain-washing. No, it could be a marvelous one for satirists. Look at the targets: Christianity, Psychiatry, Marxism, Romantic Love, Xenophobia, Science (all capitalized) and all regarded with reverence if not admiration. You need only take your pick, and not worry about bad taste. If one can make the cautious laugh by clowning, half the work is done, for laughter is the satirist's anaesthetic: he can then make his incision, darting on before the audience knows what has been done to it. But he must be swift and engaging or the laughter will turn to indifferent silence, the ultimate censorship.

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Where can the American satirist operate today? Not on television, seldom if ever in the movies, and on the stage only if he is willing to play the buffoon. But the novel remains; and it would be good to see those writers with a talent for satire (Randall Jarrell for one) strike boldly at the large targets, without that vitiating diffidence peculiar to the contemporary American novelist. We don't know very much, they seem to say . . . we are deep of course, often mystic, and we do know that love and compassion are the most beautiful things in the world and in our studies of loneliness we like to show the full potentiality, if not the actuality, of love (how Flaubert would have satirized these latter-day Bovarists!); but we don't know, or want to know, any Senators, Bishops, atomic scientists and as for psychiatrists, well, we like ours: he is a Jungian. And, shrinking each into his own skin, our novelists grow more private and for those who lack genius — that is to say the majority — more dull. I do not suggest that everyone turn his hand to satire; it is after all only one of a number of ways to get the thing said. Nor do I echo those solid *Forsyte Saga* newspaper reviewers who maintain that what we need is a good novel about the wool trade or building a dam, but what I feel we do need is more engagement in the outer world. And daring. And wit. And, finally, satirists who are needed as truth is needed, for is not satire, simply, truth grinning in a solemn canting world?

The Old in Heart

William Esty

THE recent publication of *Collected Short Stories* of Aldous Huxley (Harper, 397 pp., $5) and of Charles Rolo's anthology *The World of Evelyn Waugh* (Little, Brown, 411 pp., $6) invites a comparison between the work of these spangled performers who made their names in the twenties and thirties, and that of England's present-day so-called Angry Young Men.

Although Messrs. Amis, Wain, Braine, Osborne and Co. are now the aggressively *young* writers on the English literary scene, a rereading of Huxley and Waugh conjures up a far more effective idea of youth. This is partly because we ourselves were younger when we first read Huxley and Waugh. But the crackling exhilaration imparted by their prose at its best is mainly explained by the fact that they invite us to share a sort of imaginary youth, gay, feckless, clever, irreverent, energetically damned, unburdened by "heart." In short, like Scott Fitzgerald in such pieces as "May Day," they created a *myth* of youth, the youth we never had and therefore love. It is no accident that the best work of Huxley and Waugh was written when they were quite young, and is all about glitteringly young, luxuriously sad persons (as Auden has pointed out, one must be rich or young, or both, properly to roll sorrow on one's tongue).

They should have died early, these two, but did not. They grew older and wrote more and more, stiffening in the worst of the attitudes out of which their youth had made deliciously insouciant, outrageously enjoyable art. As they became Literary Figures, whose opinions are handsomely bought by the American magazines, their voices became shrilly self-serious, the old outrageous fun turned merely outrageous and then — boring.

THE short story has never been Huxley's forte. The best of his short pieces, the *novella*, "The Farcical History of Richard Greenow," from his first book *Limbo*, has not been included in the new collection. It will be found in Cyril Connolly's edition of *Great English Short Novels*, prefaced by the editor's terse, trenchant summary of Huxley's strength and weakness. (This criticism should be read in conjunction with Connolly's wickedly funny take-off on Huxley in *The Condemned Playground*). We get the familiar anthology standbys, "The Gioconda Smile," "The Tillotson Banquet," "Young Archimedes." How dreary it is to read these again! How dreary are *most* of these stories, especially when one reads them at a sitting. One is left with a very bad taste by this concentration of the Huxley stylistic vices: tricky plot twists, repetitions, quotations from Continental authors followed by translations, the careful explanations of the teacher who doesn't want the backward boys to miss the point.

The freshest, most pleasurable piece in the collection is an un-Huxleyan story called "Happily Ever After," one of the first he wrote. This tale of an English country household bereaved of its loved, promising young man by World War I is no masterpiece, but it has a quiet appeal quite missing from the later, more "typical," silly-clever stories. One of its figures is a determinedly detached

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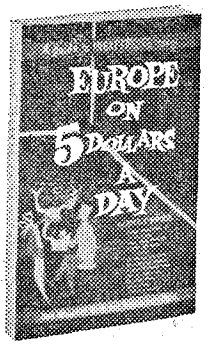

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Santayana-esque philosopher, Jacobsen, whose response to the grief that strikes the family he is visiting is to walk briskly in the garden, trying to practice his philosophy of not letting external things impinge on one. The malice in this portrait is deft, not italicized and sermonized in the later Huxley manner. But then, the later Huxley has *become* a Zen version of Jacobsen, walking briskly in a perpetual garden outside Time, while the rest of us suffer inside the house of our temporal preoccupations.

The reader who wants to savor Huxley at his best is well advised to ignore the *Collected Short Stories* and turn to the author's first four books — especially *Antic Hay*, one of the funniest novels of our time. Huxley has always had a "message," or rather a succession of messages, which have deeply marred his work, from the faddy-solemn D. H. Lawrencism of *Point Counter Point* to the faddy-solemn Perennial Philosophy of his more recent writings. *Antic Hay* has a message, too—it is about the terrible fragmentization of the modern world and the consequent splitting of modern men and women. However, it proposes no pompous panaceas, and Huxley's bitter view is here not pounded out in disguised lectures, but rather embodied in a number of wonderful, grotesque scenes, as when Theodore Gumbril, Jr. pads his shoulders and puts on a blond, fan-shaped beard so he may seek out the sexual adventures appropriate to a Renaissance Complete Man.

MR. ROLO's anthology consists, with the exception of one short story and a "novel" written at age seven, of fairly lengthy excerpts from most of the Waugh novels, spanning his development from *Decline and Fall* to *The Ordeal of Gilbert Pinfold*. In his introduction Mr. Rolo states that Waugh "has at no time been a critic of what he considers the genuine upper class. The target of his early burlesques was the new 'bogus' upper crust, which was well on its way to dominating London Society when Waugh's generation came of age—the world of frantic fashion-setters, money-makers and party-givers . . . the world, too, of the rebellious Bright Young People. Toward the latter, Waugh's attitude was double-edged: while clearly he found their anarchic spirit exhilarating and was in sympathy with their disillusionment, he perceived that their revolt was negative, their design for living senselessly prodigal. Already the norms and ideals that stirred his loyalties were those of the Old Guard, of that 'fine phalanx of the passing order. . . .'"

This is correct in its main drift, but Mr. Rolo forgets that the Bright Young People are themselves mostly "genuine upper class"; Agatha Runcible, the wildest and funniest of them all, is a peer's daughter. Waugh did *not* see the aristocracy as immune from London's frenetic, aimless pleasure-seeking. And the Rolo anthology includes the passage from *Decline and Fall* which describes how poor, harmless Paul Pennyfeather is humiliated at the hands of some

YELP

for Huckleberry Brando

I have seen the youngest minds on my block spotted with measles hallucinated
burning on rock and roll skates skipping mad ropes kept in after angry school
dragging their flagellate beat slouches to hot dog stand to Woolworth basement
to drugstore soda fountain looking for volcanic cokes or mute stark malts
knee-panted searchers aching for broken siblings and broken cap pistols and coonskin
caps with radioactive buckles on the back and raving hop-scotch kabbala
through clenched milk teeth
who yelling tears and insults demanded their money back at unsmiling boxoffice
when Pecos Slim kissed his girl in the sunset instead of his horse in the sunset
who for nine days running hummed or whistled or sang aloud or tapped on
dinnerplates or Sister's skull "M-I-C-K-E-Y---M-O-U-S-EEE" till busted in
their public mouths by fathers intent on wrestling matches
who fantasied their bones' fantasy with fabulous visions of three-year school
holidays and Captain Video for president
who walked across innumerable backyards stained with sandboxes and gym sets to
find out if you had a comic book or I had a comic book or he had a comic book
who crept hungry through deserted kitchens seeking jam or brussels sprouts or
philadelphia cream cheese and found only cooking sherry and later wandered
high and illuminated past mystic Erector sets
who played marbles for keeps and disappeared into the yelling front rows of
Saturday theatres waving popcorn bags and box kites
who loned it through the halls of P. S. 114 seeking a visionary lavatory that was
a BOYS' visionary lavatory
who stuck out their tongues at school nurses and fell down on their elbows and
wept demanding instantaneous cod liver oil
who trembled with ecstasy reading Elizabeth Mapes Dodge and floated across
the tops of cereal boxes contemplating ultimate Disneyland
who fell out of their red wagons and continued along the sidewalk and down the
street and into the YMCA pool naked —
ah, Huckleberry Brando, you with who I played hooky and with who snowballed
the ancient ikons of mailboxes stuffed full of scarlet TIME
and who was busted in your private earmuffs for jaywalking by the Safety Patrol
cossacks—
while you are lost I am lost and while you cannot play I cannot play

II

Huckleberry Brando! I'm with you standing in the corner
where you're calmer than I am
I'm with you in the corner
where none of us ever escape
I'm with you in the corner
where we're dreaming of tomorrow and ultimate tomorrow and future sideburns
and Harley-Davidson motorcycles
I'm with you in the corner
where I'm planning to make a zip-gun and blast out of this lousy drag
I'm with you in the corner
where we sense the first hairs of mustaches growing and intimations of beat
chicks in slacks and ponytails carrying battered copies of ON THE ROAD
I'm with you in the corner
where I'm choked with boredom and claustrophobia fear and beginning to run
o lost and by the wind grieved
and I'm tired of waiting so I'm beating it home, man, to Momsy and Popsy and
to beat old Howdy Doody on the beat old 21-inch television set
I'm not with you in the corner anymore, Huck
where that's tough pectoral old beat buddy

GROVER LEWIS

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brutal, drunken representatives of the wholesome country nobility.

No, if Waugh speaks lovingly of ancient houses and ancient titles, it is to flay present ways—including the present life of most British aristocrats—with the comparison to the responsible and ordered values of an older, better time. In his early, pre-Literary Figure novels, this use of the past to beat the present produces some rich comic effects, but in the later work, it all goes sour. Even in his early books, it is often hard to distinguish between the gay, irresponsible, adolescently cruel behavior Waugh is describing, and the author's own attitudes. With the passage of years, Waugh's cruel and irresponsible social views have emerged ever more explicitly, his reactionary use of a (mythical) English past against a hated present has become ever more insistent and unfunny. The horrible evacuee children from the slums in *Put Out More Flags* are a permissible comic device; the gratuitous sneer at workingmen in *Brideshead Revisited* is a cry from a genuine-Tudor soapbox. More and more it has come to seem that it is the cruelty and injustice of the past—of medieval England, of imperialist Britain—that constitute its main charm for the aging Bright Young Person. Yet when they were young, both Huxley and Waugh made wonderfully funny and talented books out of their vision of a privileged and brilliant generation dissipating its gifts in atomized, unfulfilling activity. They made a dazzling myth out of their gilded youth. What of our contemporary crop of Young Men?

THE ANSWER is, not much. Like most of the younger American writers, the Angry Young Men just don't write very well, and are therefore not very interesting. They have created no myth of their own youth, except perhaps the "myth" that they are angry, and angry in some clear, definable, significant way. They are supposed to be a gang of up-from-the-bottom, cock-a-snook militants, but this is not really so.

True, there is the difference of money. In Huxley's *Point Counter Point*, everyone meets at Sbisa's, where the prices are higher than at the Ritz. Waugh's Adam Fenwick-Symes, with ten shillings in his pocket, checks in at Shepheard's Hotel, where all drinks unless otherwise specified are champagne. The heroes of the Angry Young Novels have to scrape and calculate for their cigarettes and half-pints of beer; these writers are often at their best when conveying the sheer *grubbiness* of the life of the contemporary young Englishman reaching for secure middle-class status with nothing but a good education behind him.

But the big point about the Angry Young Men is that they're supposed to be angry about Class, and they aren't, really, though their novels are certainly permeated with an exacerbated, defensive awareness of Class. John Braine's mediocre *Room at the Top*, the story of a young man from the working class who fornicates his way up the social ladder of a mill town, shocked a number of reviewers in England, or at least there were reviewers who pretended to shock. It is hard to see why. Despite hero Joe Lampton's wearily repetitive talk of money and sex, and descriptions of the latter in terms of the former, the novel has a simple and edifying moral, pounded at the reader *ad nauseam*: Joe's working father was right, "There's some things that can be bought too dear." Braine's novel fails, not from cynicism, much less class militancy, but simply from being an over-obvious and dull morality play.

John Wain is an untalented young writer whose name is, incomprehensibly, always bracketed with that of the genuinely gifted Kingsley Amis. Wain sends his heroes on grotesque "picaresque" adventures the reader never believes in, because they are narrated in a flat-footed style that blatantly contradicts the would-be free-flowing zaniness of the episodes. When Amis attempts the grotesque, that staple of the young Huxley and Waugh, he too falls on his face. The young English writers, when they *do* achieve real wit, use a different, closer-to-actuality method.

Amis has to his credit one extraordinarily funny book, *Lucky Jim*; one fairly funny one, *That Uncertain Feeling;* and one dismal fiasco, *I Like It Here*. John Osborne's play, *Look Back In Anger*, was entertaining—energetic invective is usually interesting, at least while it lasts. A really good play *could* have been made about a surly young semi-intellectual who sits around berating his wife and expressing his dislike of T. S. Eliot as he thumbs through the Sunday papers. Osborne, however, did not maintain sufficient artistic distance from his angry young creation (cf. Stendhal's double-eyed view of his young heroes), as becomes even more apparent when one reads his noisily rude, self-pitying, ultimately pointless contribution to the "angry" anthology, *Declaration*. Amis at his worst leans, like Osborne, on mere *opinions*, supposedly "shocking": *I Like It Here* relies heavily on the Amis-hero's expressed distaste for foreign travel, Henry James, painting, the theatre, etc. All

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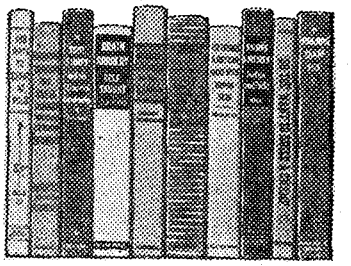

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this is a substitute for creating, just like the pontifications of the older and tireder Waugh and Huxley.

There are no aristocrats in these "young" novels, but one does meet the rich—the ruling class, if not the upper class. And here is a curious thing. The rich men in the novels of these "class-conscious" young men are always *big* (even physically), powerful, competent, awesome fellows—a view of successful businessmen that would make a *Fortune* editor blink. When a young up-from-the-bottom hero meets one of these formidable creatures, it is the youth's knees that shake, it is he who does the great man's bidding. These self-proclaimed foes of The Establishment seem more impressed by the Powers That Be than Waugh or Huxley have ever been.

The Angry Young Men are not really angry at contemporary England, the class structure, The Establishment—whatever they seem to say. They are just itchy and confused about their place in all this. And their confusion makes for poor novels.

Anger, as such, is no substitute for good writing, any more than latter-day Huxley-Waugh attitudinizings are. When we have more talent—with or without anger—we will have writers who can shape the myth of our generation, just as the young Huxley and Waugh made our image of the doomed Bright Young People.

No Time for Comedy

Harold Clurman

I DO NOT particularly concentrate on politics nowadays and I may as well confess that I read history as art and philosophy, rather than as usable knowledge, so that like the average educated American I remain an innocent in world affairs. Still, what with the headlines and an occasional skimming of articles in the daily and weekly journals, some things seep in. Sometimes they make me laugh. I am sure they oughtn't.

Several weeks ago, for example, the Administration acknowledged a recession. A day or two later an official statement assured us that there would be an upswing during the month of March. Harry Truman made some caustic remarks about the Government's bungling. Then I read a quote from President Eisenhower's speech in which he spoke—obviously referring to Truman and like-minded critics—of "men of little faith." This was followed a few days later by a Presidential statement that things would get worse before they got better. By this time I was grinning, though I know this reaction was absolutely wrong.

Remedies for the bad effects of the recession were suggested. Tax cuts, then no tax cuts, federal spending projects, then no such projects, partial disarmament, no disarmament, and so on and on to an item which announced that our Secretary of State felt there should be no halting of nuclear preparedness since this would impede the work now being done on perfecting the clean bomb. At this point I could not suppress a guffaw—which I am convinced was wicked of me.

Such wickedness never finds itself on our stage today. (There is only the wickedness of total imperviousness to these matters.) Our theatre rarely gnashes its teeth in an indignant smile or hoots with derisive pain. This is hardly surprising: after all we are not Europeans. George Kaufman, who we should remember was co-author of *Once in a Lifetime* and other similar plays, once remarked that on Broadway "Satire is what closes on Saturday night." Most satirical plays on our stage are of foreign origin.

There was some kidding in *The Teahouse of the August Moon*, but it gave offense to no one at all. *No Time for Sergeants* poked fun at the army brass, but this is an almost traditional joke. No one ever asks at the end of such plays, as someone asked me many years ago during a performance of *Waiting for Lefty*, "Say, do they really mean it?" Gore Vidal told me recently, in answer to a criticism in my review of his play, *Visit To a Small Planet*, that he had tried to suggest a point of view but that the audience in the out-of-town tryout froze when it began to suspect a serious intention. The plays of industrial unrest nowadays seem to be typified by *The Pajama Game*. Voltaire's *Candide* became a giant marshmallow on Broadway.

SOCIAL satire has always been rare on our stage because satire is the product of a degree of civilized sophistication which our theatre audiences — either literal-minded or frivolous — do not usually possess. (How many plays in the history of our theatre can we compare in purpose with Gogol's *Inspector General* or Beaumarchais' *Marriage of Figaro*?) Even in terms of harmless satire in a gay vein, the last successful show I can recall is the 1946 revue *Call Me Mister*—smoother and slicker than the *Pins and Needles* of 1937-39. What is worth examining however is why there is less satire at the present time than in the twenties—our most self-critical as well as most self-indulgent era—or in the thirties—the period of our most acute social awareness.

To create satire which goes beyond good-natured spoofing of follies and vices that are regarded as peccadilloes, you have to have a community with strong beliefs and convictions. Almost everyone today is uncertain of his beliefs and few are rash enough to harbor convictions.

But when one's beliefs have been shaken, when convictions have been undermined by events, and self-questioning has taken possession of one's soul, the consequences may still bear the marks of the believing personality. The agony which results from the destruction of once firmly held beliefs may take on a dynamic quality apparently destructive but basically the expression of a passion for a renewed faith. Blasphemy is frequently a more telling expression of the religious spirit than piety.

The satire or irony inherent in the plays of many contemporary French dramatists, beginning with Camus' *Caligula* through to Genet, Ionesco and Beckett, is a manifestation of *outrage* and not, as many suppose, the result of a wholly nihilistic attitude. They are at once savage, sometimes obscene, protests

Hunting Song

Ai, but he hunted ill.
Ai, but he hunted ill.
The shrew in the grass
had watched him pass,
crouched beside her sill.

Ai, he forgot the sun.
Ai, he forgot the sun.
The fox in the meadow
had barked at his shadow
and so he had come and gone.

Ai, he forgot the wind.
Ai, he forgot the wind.
The doe in the wood
had lightly fled
as she caught his smell upwind.

If only he had been still.
If only he had been still,
but the green-necked mallard
had dipped in the shallows
and veered behind the hill.

Ai, hunter, ai, hunter, ai, hunter
with his heavy gun at his side.
The rabbit's lair
was always near,
and there the quarry hid.

MILLEN BRAND

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against the absurdity of our existence in a world where most of the old faiths have turned to hypocrisy and a (not always conscious) cry for a new one.

These rebels without a platform (except the stage) and without a program (except that of *la farce*: French for a riotous upsetting of the official applecart) are admitted by their very detractors to express something of their country's present spirit. Most of Western Europe (particularly France) knows it is sick, caught in a web of insane contradictions. But being conscious of this and expressing it fully in a mad satire—a comic grimace is noticeable even in the most lacerating and melancholy of their plays—is a sign of vitality.

IN the hysterically prosperous twenties we had the energy and wit to poke fun at ourselves and to confess our nightmares—if only as a corrective to our creeping complacency. Besides O'Neill whose realm was the tragic (except possibly for *Marco Millions*), there were such plays, mixing the bitter with the sweet, as *What Price Glory?* by Maxwell Anderson and Laurence Stallings, *The Show-Off* by George Kelly, *The Front Page* by Hecht and McArthur, *Beggar on Horseback* by George Kaufman and Marc Connolly. The Teapot Dome scandal provided the pivotal theme of *The Grand Street Follies* of 1922. Even *The Garrick Gaieties of 1925*—Rodgers and Hart's first success—contained a number about the Monkey Trial which had some bite. There were occasional rumblings of real dissent—often incoherent or imitative (of the German expressionist dramatists) but nonetheless aggressive.

Very little of all this dug deep because, in a predominantly confident, or at least heedless, time there seemed little need for more than a smiling degree of self-depreciation. When E. E. Cummings' play *him* was produced in 1928 in the Village the entire press stood aghast, not recognizing either the play's lyric and satirical quality or its implied prophecy of the coming collapse.

The twenties, theatrically speaking, moved from the sly but painless joke of the Kaufman-Gershwin *Of Thee I Sing* (1931) into the middle thirties when our faces grew longer, and even the essentially conservative Maxwell Anderson mixed some sneers with the chuckles in *Both Your Houses*, which spoke of America's inexhaustible fund of political inertia.

The mid-thirties, as everyone knows, was the Odets period in the theatre, which, lest we forget, was marked by a wholesomely enthusiastic humor as well as the pathos and bathos of our hopes in panaceas we did not fully understand. (Satire mellowed by sentiment was always one of Odets' strong points.) But beyond the "radical," "leftwing," hortatory plays which represented the youthful singing combativeness of the New Deal days, there sprouted on our side streets little political "cabarets" somewhat reminiscent of the *boîtes* in Paris, where the pulse of the people may always be felt beating in ragtime.

The hopes of the thirties were both rebuffed and justified by the war years and their "national unity." Tennessee Williams emerged in his gentlest mood in *The Glass Menagerie*. Saroyan's early plays took the edge off their satirical outline in tender clowning and woozy or boozy kindliness. The post-war forties in the theatre were enlivened by Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* which, for all its tearfulness, contains definite elements of satire and, generally speaking, reveals a more sober and cautious continuance of the New Deal mentality of the thirties. We still produced affably liberal comedies like Thurber and Nugent's *The Male Animal*, Lindsay and Crouse's *The State of the Union* and Garson Kanin's *Born Yesterday*.

The decline of the satiric spirit begins with the fifties. Our hopes were dissipated, rebelliousness was first frowned upon and then squelched. Social criticism now seems to lack a base and the building of positive values appears to lack support in social realities. What new affirmations are made seem to turn inward, are always on a personal level, as if to say "please mind your own business and let me mind mine—and if we are going to take a public stand it must remain within the confines of ideologies and organizations of undisputed respectability and authority." We are not so much frightened, now that McCarthy has passed away, as transfixed, stuck, spiritually immobilized.

We do not know today if we are prosperous or not or exactly what it means to be prosperous—except that to fail to be a success is shameful. We are the leaders of the Western world, but we are not sure whom we are leading or to what. We do not know if we can stop war, though we are rather hopeless of surviving it. We pray that the psychoanalysts will reassure us since the moralists and preachers have not redeemed us. Playwrights who have tried to portray the consequences of this disarray now apologize for their perversity and promise that with some medical assistance they will become good boys. According to our critics *and* audiences it is somehow terribly wrong to be "un-

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by
Barron B. Beshoar

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healthy," so that as John Gassner has written, "Health seems to be our brand of decadence."

To be confused is not yet to be damned. An avowal of our confusion even in terms of the comic without fear of some notes of exasperation would be a sign of strength. We live in a challenging time, but we seem unable to take up the challenge. The so-called cynicism of the twenties was creative; the solemnity and some of the immature sloganizing of the thirties and forties were still creative; what is stultifying us now is a failure to recognize and cry out that somewhere along the way our line was lost; that we must go back and find out what it was and what happened to it.

Revolt: True and False

Kenneth Rexroth

YOU don't have to read Toynbee or Hegel to know that there is a systole and diastole to history. What goes up comes down, what swings left swings right; a literate chimpanzee could learn this from ten years or less of reading the newspapers. Alas, the merchants of words seem not, in the second postwar period, to have understood. Nobody covered his bets, nobody protected his flank. Now the spokesmen of the age of conformity are in a very exposed position. Apple-sellers are just around the corner, a shadow is haunting the leading thinktank circles—the shadow of a second Writers' Project. The younger critics are trying to pawn their pillowcase headdresses, the last Eliot anybody will admit remembering is George, every known type of ambiguity is going for ten cents on the dollar, the quality slicks and the pulpier pulps have discovered dissent, Madison Avenue is busy hunting samples of a new hot commodity—nonconformity. What goes up comes down, with as little insight. Blindly I go my way, said Adolf, like a sleep-walker—not to make an invidious comparison, but because that historic phrase is the perfect rhetoric of the enthusiastic pawn of history.

Why are the ideogogues so at the mercy of their own verbiage? Why do they always have to believe it? I think it is one of the secrets of our civilization—sell the salesman. If you sell him hard enough, he'll take care of the customers, and he's got lots of cousins. The purveyors of the Social Lie today *must* believe it. After all we're not living in the age of Burke: this merchandise has had a long time to spoil. If they didn't believe it smelled like violets, they'd die of disgust. Now a long but significant digression (like Toynbee):

I'll never forget one day, bumming around Texas in the early twenties with a very sharp boy named Harold Mann. Just a couple of years before, he had been St. Louis district manager of Real Silk Hosiery, the famous house-to-house pitch of those days. We were busted, so he went to the local Real Silk office, perhaps it was in Pecos, and took out a kit to pick up some change. He came back early, with plenty of change, but with ashen cheeks and haunted eyes. Said he, "I have just witnessed one of the great climacterics of history, far more important than the World War. It used to be the manager told you, 'The sucker comes to the door. You say this, she says that, you put your foot in the door, she says this, you say that, you bust out the kit. The sucker says this, you say that—and so on.' Now you go down at eight in the morning and spend an hour singing *Real Silk, Real Silk*, to the tune of *Marching Through Georgia*, and listen to the boss tell you what good stockings they are—all on your own time. Mark my words, this will make a greater change in the human race than the invention of fire!"

Wise words. When Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., a member of Stevenson's writing crew, came to review Adlai's speeches for *The Reporter*, he reviewed them with the delicious surprise of a sweet new ingenue in the hands of the late Lionel Barrymore. The technical term for this is the hallucination of documents and the delusion of participation.

SO NOW. Before all the Henry Adamses from the Bronx and the cornfield Lord Chesterfields start miscegenating, blowing jazz poetry and taking heroin, it would be a good idea to understand what that long-forgotten word "revolt" is all about. Who objects to what and why, and what is it that is wrong with what we used to call The System, anyway? How do you nonconform?

One thing for sure, you don't do it by caricaturing the values of the very civilization that debauched you in the first place. You don't dash here and yon through the night, wrecking stolen cars and going "Whee!" You don't have six deserted wives, all of them pregnant. You don't take dope. You don't "dig" jazz. (Which means you don't think it is savage jungle drums and horns blowing up a storm around the flickering fires while the missionary soup comes to a boil.) You don't Whitmanize and Rimbaudize and Artaudize that evil perversion we call, in jazz, "Crow-Jimism." Probably you shave. Probably you wear shoes. At least you plan to take up both if things get much worse. If you dress and behave eccentrically, you dress and behave the way nobody else does—not the way every high school boy who can remember Jimmy Dean does. The essence of revolt is understanding, the essence of disconformity is comprehension, and their second essence is purposeful action.

This is why the word merchants can't dig it. They haven't, don't and can't *act*. Marx called this "human self-alienation"—the divorce of man from his work, and hence, his divorce from his fellows, and hence from himself. This is what that thing we used to call the Revolution is all about. There is good reason for disaffiliation; it's not just for kicks. But the man who has got by all his life just quivering his glottis can't, constitutionally, understand this. I am, amongst other things, a poet. My poetry is work. I write it to lay hands on an obdurate world, to make love to women and to overthrow the State, the Church and the Capitalist System. I do not write it to get it analyzed in a seminar and neither did John Donne or Arthur Rimbaud. And anybody can throw away his socks and let his feet go dirty. The billionaires all have six deserted wives, or at least they used to in the best days of the old *Masses* and *Mother Earth*. Disaffiliation from the inhuman means affiliation with the truly human.

LITERATURE is work. Art is work. And work, said St. Benedict, is prayer. There are at least three Zen Buddhists to be found in every public toilet in every city over 250,000 in the U.S.A. after ten at night. "You just dig it man. You just let it happen. It just busts in your head like sh—t in your blood stream, you dig? It's the old whirl, man, you dig?" Have these poor disheveled children any idea of the work, years and years of it, that goes to the perfecting of a Japanese swordsman, a judo expert, one of the admirals that pulled off Pearl Harbor, a monk in a Zendo, or any other recognized exponent of the philosophy of Boddhidarma? No. "Like that's all for squares, man. Like pops, don't come around talking that old moldy fig political jive, you bug me, man. W.O.R.K., wasn't that the name of a bunch of real gone cats used to ride freight trains in Montana and Washington way back? Like why don't you make like them, pops, and dig

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this new Zen kick, like?" *Illumination.* The reasoned derangement of the senses. Rimbaud, Celine, Artaud, Genet, Beckett, Ionesco—is that what they did: just let it happen?

Yes and no. Rimbaud no more than got those famous words out of his mouth than he went off and never came back and never wrote another word. Reasoned derangement of the senses is for gun runners in Africa when they relax *en famille* in a grass hut; it's a bourgeois-type kick. It is true, especially in a period of cowardice and silence, that those who are being stamped into the mud see most clearly the iron soles of Juggernaut and the clay feet within—but Celine has been ill for a very long time, and Artaud was not at all well. Genet we can lay on the side—he has always seemed to me a one-man rubberneck bus of the sins of Paris, an up-to-date and conscienceless Eugene Sue. But anybody who thinks Beckett and Ionesco just let it happen needs to go back and take English One. The real danger, of course, is that artists like these will be hooked by the mystique they have, innocently, helped create.

AN orthodoxy is forming, and like all orthodoxies it is a system of lies and evasions, a ritual of the lazy and greedy. How do you escape it? By reading Marx and Kropotkin? By joining up? Indeed not. *Playboy*, a leading socio-economic authority, says, "Rexroth says the Anarchists must organize." Excuse me; I mean, *ça ira*. It is a deliberately fostered delusion of Western Civilization, of the *Old* and *New Testaments* and the *Koran*, that life is hard to understand and harder still to live. It is only too obvious, every step of the way as the newspapers roll past, what should be—should have been—done.

You are right in choosing art as the one perfect instrument; you are even right in choosing jazz. The best artists of the past fifteen years of darkness have found voice in jazz for the same reason that, in the years of terror after the 1905 revolution, the Russians wrote metaphysics: the cops couldn't understand it. But do you think jazz is something you just get up and blow out of a cloud of pod? Do you think being beat comes easy? You don't get that way growing an embouchure moustache and painting nail holes on your hands and feet. Do you know about Lester Young, clinging to his saxophone in the Army stockades in the piney woods of the savage South? Do you know that story?

Be very careful you don't become what Madison Avenue wants every artist to be—a wild man.

ART

Maurice Grosser

A LOAN exhibition of the works of Pierre-Auguste Renoir is being shown at Wildenstein's until May 10 in benefit of the Citizens' Committee for Children of New York. The seventy paintings and eight or ten pieces of sculpture present the whole range of Renoir's work, from the precise drawing and grayed tones of the *Pont des Arts*, painted in 1868 at the age of twenty-seven, to the voluptuous forms and prismatic color of *The Concert*, done in 1919, the year of the painter's death. It is probably the most representative group of Renoirs to be seen here since the Rosenberg show of 1944. One regrets the absence of the celebrated pictures from the Phillips Gallery and from Boston of boating life on the Marne. But there is the *Moulin de la Galette* and the *Waitress from Duval's* to replace them.

What an easy-going man Renoir must have been! One understands his distrust for Seurat's intellectualized painting theories. Renoir did not work by theory; he depended on spontaneity and sensibility. Since he was a man of simple tastes —a sort of Saint Francis of the brush—he could allow himself the luxury of painting as he liked. And he liked the most pleasant things — pretty girls, presentable ladies and gentlemen, children with big eyes and clear complexions, fruit, flowers and sunny landscapes — all the elements of a good world which his innocent, sensual eye transformed into a Third Republic Garden of Eden.

Since he did not work by voluntary formula, his painting style has great variety. Sometimes the paint is put down in tiny touches, thin and liquid; sometimes it is loaded. Sometimes the edges are neat; sometimes everything melts in a mist. A number of the pictures are in the pointillist manner. There is even one done at l'Estaque of olives and pines and white, rocky hills whose composition and treatment are not unlike Cézanne's—whom Renoir was visiting.

However little most of the pictures seem to have been tarnished by time or restoration, one still would like to have them as they came from the painter's brush. For color was Renoir's gift and passion. It is really only in his color that he conforms to the Impressionist idea. As Proust pointed out, he was, in sentiment, a belated Fragonard. Vlaminck has a pretty story about his color sense, of how Renoir, taking a walk with some other painters, left his overcoat behind in a field. They all returned to

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look for it. "There it is," said Renoir, pointing in the distance. "You can't tell what it is," said somebody, "it's too far away." "Oh, yes I can. It's black. There are no blacks in nature."

A LARGE and handsome show of the Sicilian painter, Renato Guttuso, is being held at the ACA Gallery until April 28. Guttuso is one of the most brilliant of the contemporary Italians, a vigorous draughtsman, a lively colorist and a master of differentiated paint textures. His subjects are not unlike those of the contemporary Italian cinema —ordinary people and things. Whatever he paints is seen from an unexpected point of view—people crossing a street, each one different, each one in a hurry; a farm hand eating spaghetti; still lifes of the common objects of a painter's studio—brushes, tubes and cans of paint. The largest picture, and perhaps the finest, is of an orange grove, the whole canvas filled with leaves and fruit, relieved only in one corner by the tile roofing of a white-washed shed. The picture of a man and woman on a Vespa illustrates brilliantly and touchingly how the scooter has motorized the love-life of the Italian young.

Guttuso is a fine painter. His compositions are free and emphatic. The color is perhaps more striking than harmonious. The vigor of his linear patterns, the bold opposition of colors, the constant presence of characterization carried almost to caricature, give a poster-like projection. In fact, the work escapes the epithet "poster" only by the humanity of its conception and the sensitivity of the artist's hand. To make an arbitrary comparison, just as the work of Renoir is domestic and companionable, the work of Guttuso is public and moralistic.

Renoir was painting pictures of and for amateurs of painting living comfortable lives in comfortable houses. Consequently the works are soft and harmonious, subtle and detailed, made to be seen often and at close range.

Guttuso, on the other hand, working in Italy, where there is little private collecting, paints for large exhibitions and museum purchase. The pictures are bold in design and color, striking in theme—with sociological overtones — and planned to read clearly from a distance. Pictures painted with this in mind have more emphasis and less depth than more personalized work. And, though it is manifestly unfair to compare the living and the dead, Guttuso's brilliant manipulation of the declamatory style cannot be expected to offer as rich an experience as Renoir's quiet and confident serenity expressed through a more refined tradition.

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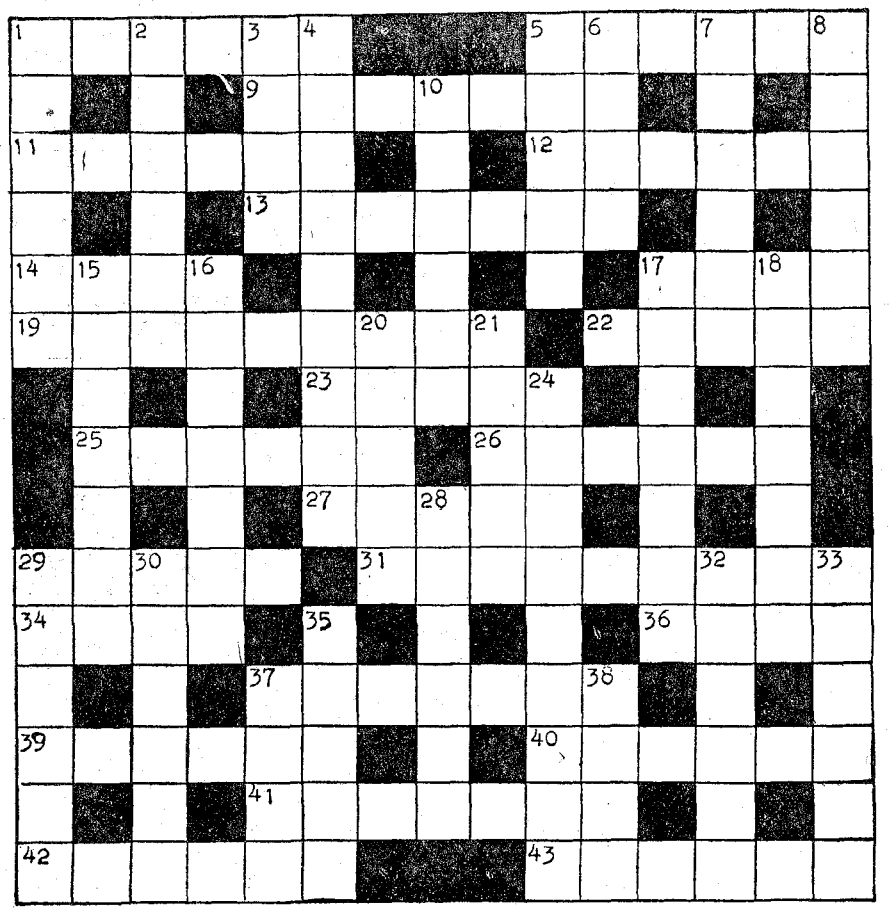
Crossword Puzzle No. 769

By FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS:

1 They might appear rather smug at more than one series. (6)
5 One sort of tag makes another tag lie. (6)
9 Not what the G.I. wears—even if his head is cold! (You wouldn't like them, either!) (7)
11 And while this suggests the opposite of a head cold, the brave might return to it. (6)
12 Certainly not a healthy function. (3-3)
13 20 is confused about the state of bad business, perhaps. (7)
14 Is the desert raid broken up? (4)
17 Hardy girl, possibly. (4)
19 and 10 down Did he give the city the run-around? (3, 6, 6)
22 Not a likely place for a private discussion. (5)
23 This town seems to be the first in England. (5)
25 We would be wrong to follow gentle growth like this. (6)
26 Bad, like a candle? (6)
27 Arrange some of your tendencies to be rather strict. (5)
29 The arrangement of ham and eggs, for example. (5)
31 She cleans a version of it for the steward. (9)
34 One who might 12 without getting sick. (4)
36 Took a leafy plant inside. (4)
37 This goes into something I'd put back on a mask! (7)
39 It might be tenuous as hatred. (6)
40 Passages composed by 6, in like circumstances. (6)
41 Are sets of them more difficult as clues? (7)
42 A pig might eventually become less careful. (6)
43 The part of 30 that comes out on a high place used to be in prison. (6)

DOWN:

1 A trifle showy? At least a trifle!
2 Rossini's was thievish. (6)
3 A common sign of England's head of 31. (4)
4 Is Dickens' character relatively healthy? (3, 6)
5 If you're having success here, you might have such a mind. (5)
6 Man? Wight? (Either one!) (4)
7 FF, compared to F. (6)
8 Only belief can make me this! (6)
15 Brings up something about me suggestive of pipe-cleaners. (7)
16 The sort of liver suggestive of 4's brother David? (7)
17 Is the sergeant more properly addressed first? (7)
18 Where the gnomon casts its shadow.
20 Proving he can be shown up by a little wisdom. (5)
21 Does his name suggest a contracted version of a well-known comedian?
24 Holds up the service, perhaps, as braid does. (9)
28 Tutelar diety (bearing a gift, no doubt). (6)
29 Set wrong in an environment belonging to us, it turns out. (6)
30 Ruins the way Lancelot, for example, goes up to his resting place. (6)
32 This little town has character. (6)
33 Inferior tenant, by the sound of it.
35 Schumann's was wild. (5)
37 Palm Sunday, if specific. (4)
38 Miss Stevens' get-up? (4)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 768

ACROSS: 1 BIGAMIST; 5 STITCH; 10 PURISTS; 11 and 21 OPTICAL ILLUSION; 12 ABLE; 16 and 3 LAND MASS; 17 SPENDER; 19 IDLER; 20 VOTARY; 23 and 37 LEFT AT THE POST; 25 REEFS; 27 LEVITES; 31 UTAH; 32 SIDED; 33, 13 and 9 IT'S A SMALL WORLD; 36 INTRUDE; 38 NORMAN; 39 ARBUCKLE. DOWN: 1 BYPLAY; 2 GARBLED; 4 SESAME; 6 TUTU; 7 TOCCATA; 8 HOLIDAYS; 13 SPRITES; 14 ANTACID; 15 LEVERED; 17 SEPAL; 18 ROSES; 24 FLATTER; 26 FETLOCK; 28 VIPER; 29 TENTER; 30 WATTLE; 34 TUBA; 35 PERU.

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(The following, in condensed form, is text of the third public statement in a series by the National Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy. It appeared in The New York Times April 11, 1958)

NUCLEAR BOMBS CAN DESTROY ALL LIFE IN WAR

SIGNED BY

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Rev. Henry Hitt Crane
India Edwards
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2. *We must call for a United Nations inspected ban on tests*
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5. **Letters to the heads of state of the United States and the Soviet Union, calling for immediate cessation of tests.**
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